OUTPOST ON THE WABASH

1787-1791

edited by

GAYLE THORNBROUGH

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OUTPOST ON THE WABASH

1787-1791

Letters of BRIGADIER GENERAL JOSIAH HARMAR *and* MAJOR JOHN FRANCIS HAMTRAMCK *and other letters and documents selected from the* HARMAR PAPERS *in the* WILLIAM L. CLEMENTS LIBRARY

edited by Gayle Thornbrough

INDIANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
INDIANAPOLIS -:- 1957

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FOREWORD

The letters and documents comprising this volume have been selected from the Harmar Papers in the William L. Clements Library of the University of Michigan. I wish to acknowledge the interest shown by Howard H. Peckham, director, and William S. Ewing, curator of manuscripts, of the Clements Library, in their selection and preparation for publication.

I also wish to thank Charles H. Cochran, of La Porte, Indiana, for allowing me to examine the collection of John Armstrong papers which is in his possession. Mrs. Harry T. Watts, of Vincennes, kindly sent me notes on the location of Fort Knox. I also wish to acknowledge the help of Stephen T. Riley, librarian of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Margaret A. Flint, reference librarian of the Illinois State Historical Library, and Major James Ripley Jacobs, U. S. Army, Ret.

The map was made by Pierre H. Boulle, and the drawing showing the plan of Fort Knox, 1788, was reproduced from the original in the Indiana Historical Society Library.

G. T.

INTRODUCTION

On April 24, 1787, the Continental Congress resolved "That the Secretary at War direct the commanding officer of the troops of the United States on the Ohio to take immediate and efficient measures for dispossessing a body of men who have in a lawless and unauthorised manner taken possession of post St. Vincents in defiance of the proclamation and authority of the United States and that he employ the whole or such of the force under his command as he shall judge necessary to effect the Object."

In consequence, the Secretary at War, Henry Knox, ordered Lieut. Col. Josiah Harmar, commander of the First Regiment of the United States Army, to the little village on the Wabash called variously Post St. Vincent, Post Vincennes, or simply Vincennes, in the summer of 1787, where he established a garrison commanded by Maj. John Francis Hamtramck.

This settlement and the French villages in the Illinois country were in a state verging on anarchy. After the conquest of the Northwest by George Rogers Clark in 1778-79, the Commonwealth of Virginia, under whose authority Clark commanded, made some attempt to govern the country. In the spring of 1778 Col. John Todd, who had been on Clark's expedition, was appointed county lieutenant for the County of Illinois which embraced the area claimed by Virginia northwest of the Ohio. At Vincennes and in the Illinois villages Todd established courts of criminal and civil jurisdiction composed of a president and several magistrates to settle disputes and maintain order. The population of Vincennes at this time was mainly French, though after the Clark conquest a few Americans appeared. Indians frequented the village and there was a scattering of Negroes, mostly slaves. Under the leadership of J. M. P. Le Gras, president of the court, French custom and law prevailed and the community existed with little interference or supervision from Virginia.

In 1783 Virginia ceded to the United States her claim to the Old Northwest. Four years later the Congress passed an ordinance providing for the government of this vast area, and finally in June, 1790, after the Federal government had been organized, the Secretary of the Territory, Winthrop Sargent, arrived in Vincennes to establish the civil authority of the United States. The intervening years, from 1783 to 1790, were filled with unrest and confusion. The disruptive factors were complex; they were national, international, economic, political, and local.

The situation of Vincennes and the Illinois villages during the post-Revolutionary years mirrored the "critical period" of the new Republic when it struggled to survive under the shadow government of the Articles of Confederation, adopted the Constitution, and finally established the Federal government which superseded the Confederation. The Congress of the Confederation found little time and had no money to expend on these western outposts. Besides the lack of strong government, two other problems besetting the young nation were of great concern to the Northwest—the development of an Indian policy and satisfactory adjustments of several points of dispute with its imperialist neighbors, Great Britain and Spain.

By the Treaty of Paris following the Revolution the British relinquished the vast area south of the Great Lakes and east of the Mississippi known as the Old Northwest to the United States. The people most affected by this—the Indians—were not a party to the treaty, though it was the land on which they lived that the British handed over to the new nation. Consequently, one of the most urgent problems facing the Congress of the United States was the formulation of an Indian policy in the Northwest. It is doubtful that a peace whereby Indian-white relations would have evolved peacefully could have been worked out, but the ensuing period of strife might have been lessened had the United States established a strong, responsible government immediately and worked out a sensible, realistic Indian policy.

In the western lands the Congress saw a source of much-needed revenue, and enterprising speculators saw a chance for fortune. Also it was the intention of Congress to grant land as bounty to members of the Revolutionary army. A committee report to Congress in 1783 laid the foundation for the future Indian policy of the United States. Although the Indians were to be considered as a conquered people without rights because they had chosen to ally themselves with the British against the Americans, they were not to be treated as such. Rather than try to drive the Indians from American soil, the Congress adopted a policy of negotiating with them and "accommodating [them] . . . as far as the public good [would] . . . admit, and if they should appear dissatisfied at the boundary lines which it [might] be found necessary to establish, rather to give them some compensation for their claims, rather than hazard a war, which [would] be much more expensive." The aim of the policy was toward a gradual peaceful retirement of the Indians as the frontier advanced. In the areas to which Indian title had not been extinguished, the Indians were to be exempt from American law and permitted to exercise some of the attributes of sovereignty by retaining and enforcing their own peculiar laws and customs. The Congress claimed the sole right to negotiate with the Indians, and any agreements made between individuals and Indians for land were declared null and void.

Since the Indians had not been a party to the peace treaty, it was necessary for the United States to conclude articles of peace and friendship with the various tribes, and establish boundary lines between the Indian lands and those of the United States. In 1784 at Fort Stanwix a treaty was made between the United States and the Six Nations, and in January, 1785, at Fort McIntosh a treaty between the United States and the

Wyandots, Delawares, Chippewa, and Ottawa was signed. By the first the Oneida and Tuscarora were secured in the possession of their lands, and the western boundary line of the Six Nations was drawn. By the second a line was drawn about the lands south of Lake Erie reserved to the tribes signing the treaty. In February, 1786, at Fort Finney at the mouth of the Miami River, the United States concluded a treaty with the Shawnee which drew a boundary between the Americans and that tribe. By the treaties of Stanwix and Finney the tribes were pushed back behind a line that left to the Americans the greater part of the Ohio country east of the Cuyahoga and south of a line drawn a little to the north of central Ohio. The Indians were not long in realizing where such negotiations would lead. A government of great strength and large resources might have been able to impose successfully such terms. Certainly the weak and impoverished Confederation was unable to do so. The leading chiefs, perhaps under British counsel, now began with some success to join the various tribes into a confederation to thwart the American intention and to prevent negotiations being conducted with individual tribes.

In 1783 Congress issued a proclamation against individuals squatting on the public lands, and by the Land Ordinance of 1785 provided for the survey and sale of the territory northwest of the River Ohio as Indian title to it was acquired. The appearance of surveyors in the Ohio country with orders to establish the meridians and base line and mark off the range and township lines preparatory to sale, sounded the alarm, and the Indians resorted to the only answer they knew—border warfare against the American settlers.

Closely tied in with the Indian problem were the relations between the United States and Great Britain. The British by the Treaty of Paris had agreed to withdraw from their posts within the area they relinquished to the United States, including Niagara, Detroit, and Michilimackinac "with all convenient speed." When the American emissary approached the British general in command in 1783 to discuss arrangements for turning over these posts, he was put off, and it soon became evident that the British were not finding it convenient to move out. The posts were very important to the valuable Canadian fur trade that passed through Montreal to London, and the merchants, fearing that the transfer of the posts would divert the trade to New York and Philadelphia, sent strong protests and petitions to the governor general. The British defended their treaty violation by maintaining that they had an obligation to the Indians of the Northwest, and since the Americans failed to develop a satisfactory Indian policy, they felt compelled to retain the posts until the Indians and Americans were at peace. At the same time it was important to the fur trade for the British to regain the confidence of the red men which had been shattered when the British had handed over the Indian lands between the Lakes and the Ohio to the United States. Also, British traders were concerned by American plans of pushing the Indians westward out of their hunting grounds to make way for settlers, and they wanted to forestall a full-fledged Indian war which would have been disastrous to the trade and to all three parties—Indians, British, and Americans. The British further justified their retention of the posts on the ground that the United States had failed to live up to its treaty obligations regarding the commitments they had made in respect to treatment of Loyalists and their property and to the recovery of pre-war debts by British subjects.

Not only did the British on the north offer diplomatic challenges and uneasy fears to the precarious Confederation. To the west across the Mississippi and on the south in East and West Florida lay Spanish dominions. Peace between the United States and Britain brought alarm to Spain whose great fear was the rapid expansion of the young Republic westward to menace her possessions. Spain's weapon against this was the closing of the Mississippi to American ships. This move was announced in 1784, and Diego de Gardoqui was dispatched to the United States to secure acquiescence in the measure and negotiate a commercial treaty and define boundaries between the two nations. Protests from the burgeoning settlements south of the Ohio and from the French villages to the north were strong against assenting to the closing of the Mississippi. The very life of these settlements depended largely on their being able to ship their produce to the New Orleans market or on out through the gulf and back up the coast to the eastern ports.

But Gardoqui found John Jay, secretary for foreign affairs, willing to listen to him. The penniless young nation desperately needed a favorable trade agreement with Spain and her colonies, and Jay found himself forced to accept the Spanish decree relative to the Mississippi in return for trade. Western settlers felt that they had been sacrificed to the interest of the eastern seaboard. Sectional sentiments erupted. The upshot was that there developed a secessionist movement in the West, a willingness on the part of some of the western emigrants to break with the seaboard and link themselves at least commercially with Spain. National loyalty, as we know it, was then young and tenuous. Spain did not fail to see what such a division would mean to her. By plot and intrigue she set out to alienate the western settlements from the United States and entice Americans to cross the Mississippi and settle on the Spanish side.

With the great imperialist powers of Great Britain and Spain on the north, south, and west, and increasingly hostile Indians threatening her advancing frontier, the United States was compelled to take steps to show her authority by establishing military posts in the area ceded by the British. After the Revolution the American army had been rapidly demobilized until by 1784 all that remained were twenty-five men at Fort Pitt and fifty-five at West Point. In June, 1784, the Congress requested four states, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania to furnish a total of seven hundred men to protect the young settlements on the frontier. To command this force the Congress commissioned thirty-one-year-old Josiah Harmar, a veteran of the Revolution who had been discharged with rank of lieutenant colonel. Enlistment was slow and Harmar organized the First American Regiment out of about two hundred and fifty men. On March 8, 1785, Henry Knox was named secretary at war by the Congress to preside over a military establishment of less than six hundred men. Gradually Harmar established a series of fortifications on the Ohio down from Fort Pitt, and by the end of 1785 he himself had moved down to the mouth of the Muskingum to take up headquarters at Fort Harmar.

Harmar's force was too small and his lines of supply and communication too weak to offer more than a show of authority. As immigration increased, so did the Indian raids and depredations along the Ohio and in Kentucky. It was inevitable that the settlers in Kentucky would take matters of protecting their settlements into their own hands, and raids from Kentucky against the tribes north of the Ohio became frequent. They were usually led by militia officers, but were conducted without authority from the national government and in defiance of the government's announced policy of peaceful negotiation. Since none of the expeditions were powerful enough to cripple the Indians permanently, they served to heighten Indian hostility and longing for revenge. They emphasized the weakness of the Confederation and the slight prestige it enjoyed in the West.

In Vincennes on the Wabash all these factors—the weak and precarious state of the general government and its failure to provide a civil authority for its western country, the uneasy relations between the United States and Britain and Spain, and the Indian menace, combined with the complete breakdown of local government—brought the community to a sad plight. In 1787 there were 520 French and 103 American male inhabitants. The Americans who came to Vincennes were on the whole not an attractive lot. They were generally lawless refugees and vagabonds, who squatted on public land in and around the village. They got along with neither the French nor the Indians. They debauched the latter with whiskey and disrupted the fur trade and the friendly relations that had existed between the red men and the French. The Americans regarded all Indians as potential enemies and killed them indiscriminately. This in turn led the Indians to regard all white men in the village with hostility and the French suffered accordingly. In the summer of 1786 the situation of the town grew desperate. John Hardin's expedition of Kentucky militia against a party of savages near old Shawneetown in early July increased the tension. About the middle of the month a war party of 450 savages moved down the Wabash determined, it was reported, to destroy the Americans that had settled there. The role which the British traders from the Lake posts played at this juncture is not clear. The Americans suspected them of urging on the Indians and probably supplying them with ammunition. The French inhabitants rallied to the aid of the Americans and were able to persuade the Indians to depart. The savages fired a few shots and destroyed some crops and vowed that they would return in the fall. Faced with this threat the French and Americans joined together in an appeal to George Rogers Clark who was at Louisville to come to their aid.

The alarm of the people of Vincennes was shared by Kentucky settlers, and in August the field officers of the District of Kentucky met, and with authority from Virginia determined on an expedition against the northwestern tribes. Clark was appointed commander-in-chief. The request of Governor Patrick Henry of Virginia that a detachment of Federal troops be ordered to join the expedition was denied. Such a force, though small, would have had a good effect on the undisciplined militia.

Clark's force, when he left Clarksville at the Falls of the Ohio opposite Louisville, numbered about 1,200 Kentucky militia, and he recruited volunteers from Vincennes before he started up the Wabash. His command was unruly, and disorder and insubordination was soon evident. Three days out of Vincennes two hundred of the militia mutinied when reports were circulated that provisions were running out, and Clark had to retire to Vincennes. Most of the men hurried on home, but one hundred and fifty remained out of which Clark established a garrison to protect the village and, it was hoped, awe the Indians sufficiently to check their raids on Kentucky. Clark immediately opened negotiations with the Wabash tribes, won a truce, and a promise that they would meet him in council in the spring.

Clark fed his garrison from stores obtained in Vincennes and the Illinois villages. Clothing and other supplies he obtained by seizing property belonging to three Spanish merchants who had come to Vincennes to trade. Such seizure was applauded by some of the settlers in the West who felt it was only fair treatment, since Americans were refused the right to use the Mississippi and any American goods reaching Spanish soil were immediately confiscated. Other Westerners were disturbed by this highhanded move against Spain. By the summer of 1786 resentment against the Congress for accepting Spain's decree closing the Mississippi to American ships was running high, and there were many settlers who were weighing the advantages of cutting off from the seaboard states and making their own commercial agreements with Spain or even moving across the Mississippi to Spanish territory. The failure of Congress to deal effectively with the Indians and establish a civil government in the Northwest contributed to their discontent. They also expressed concern over Clark's plan to hold a council with the Indians. If his negotiations were not successful, the Indians thus assembled might turn in a body against the scattered settlements.

Protests went from Kentucky to Virginia. The result was that Clark was reprimanded by the Virginia Council for raising recruits, maintaining a garrison, impressing supplies, and seizing Spanish property, all without express authority from Virginia. The Council sent a report on his conduct to the Virginia delegates in Congress who were asked to express to the Spanish minister Virginia's regrets at his actions. Clark was ordered back to Virginia to answer for his deeds, and

Vincennes was left in a state of greater confusion than ever.

It was at this juncture that the Congress acted. After consideration of reports from Virginia and from Secretary at War Henry Knox and Secretary of Foreign Affairs John Jay, the Congress passed the resolution quoted above, ordering Lieutenant Colonel Harmar to Vincennes to "dispossess" the men who had taken command there illegally.

The letters in this volume begin as Harmar is preparing to carry out these instructions. They and the accompanying documents tell of his visit to Vincennes and the Illinois villages, and his decision to establish a garrison at Vincennes under the command of Maj. John Francis Hamtramck. Harmar then returned to Fort Harmar and the main body of the correspondence reproduced here consists of the letters that passed between him and Hamtramck thereafter. The letters continue through Harmar's expedition against the Miami towns in 1790 and Hamtramck's simultaneous march up the Wabash toward the Wea towns, and into the following months. They show how precarious the existence of the outpost on the Wabash was, the difficulties of supplying it, and even communicating with it. The weakness of the authority of the general government under the Confederation is evident on every hand. Not until June, 1790, almost three years after Harmar was at Vincennes, did the Secretary of the Territory arrive there to set up civil government under the Ordinance of 1787. Major Hamtramck struggled as best he could to maintain peace and order among the French and Americans. To provide some civil authority he attempted with partial success to revive the old French system of government by a court of magistrates. At the same time he suffered the humiliation of being unable to prevent unauthorized attacks on the Indians from Kentucky. Even citizens of Vincennes sometimes defiantly joined such parties and he was powerless to prevent them or punish them. Consequently the village and garrison lived in almost constant fear of Indian vengeance.

The concern over the British to the north and the Spanish to the west is brought out, though in retrospect one wonders if both these powers were not equally disturbed by the presence of the garrison at Vincennes, small as it was. Hamtramck reported that many of the French around Vincennes were moving across the Mississippi, and there is evidence that the British were influencing the Miami and upper Wabash tribes against making peace with the Americans.

As for the army, the letters show its weakness in numbers, difficulties of recruiting and keeping quotas filled, slow pay, meagerness of clothing and other supplies, and most of all the inadequacy of food. Getting supplies from the second Fort Steuben located at the Falls of the Ohio opposite Louisville to Fort Knox, the name given the garrison at Vincennes, was a never-ceasing struggle; and the post was seldom free from fear of running out of rations completely. Often it had to rely on supplies from the village which was at times on verge of starvation, too. The revelation of the speculation on the meager pay of the poor recruits by some of the officers and commissaries is an interesting and pathetic sidelight. The length of the sick lists is appalling as is the scarcity of even the most primitive medical supplies.

One of the most important aspects of the letters is the light they throw on the shift in the policy of the United States in regard to the Indians. Failing to win cessions of land and guarantees of peace without resort to force, officials, both civil and military, came to realize that only a military defeat of sound proportion would bring the red men to terms. The new Federal government undertook this. But it was to take Harmar's ill-fated expedition in 1790 and St. Clair's defeat in 1791, to bring about the essential reorganization and increase in the size of the army and changes in the method of supplying it, which made possible Wayne's successful campaign in 1794.

Josiah Harmar was born in Philadelphia in 1753, and educated at Quaker schools in that city. He entered the Revolutionary army on October 1, 1776, as a major in the Third Pennsylvania Regiment, and rose to lieutenant colonel. He was selected to carry the ratification of the peace treaty to France and enjoyed the sights and entertainment offered by Paris and London. On October 19, 1784, he married Sarah Jenkins, of Philadelphia, the Mrs. Harmar referred to frequently in the letters. Because Pennsylvania furnished the largest number of troops to the army of seven hundred called by the Congress in 1784 to protect the frontier, that state was permitted to name the commanding officer who would have the rank of lieutenant colonel. Harmar was selected. He was young, educated, well connected, had some independent means, and had had some experience both in military and civil affairs. He was breveted brigadier general in 1787. In many ways he fulfilled his assignment well. He organized his small force and divided it among strategically placed garrisons along the Ohio and its important tributaries. He furnished detachments to protect surveying parties and new settlements. He carried on despite a seemingly indifferent Congress, a totally inadequate force, and the aggravatingly bad service rendered by the army contractors. His career reached its climax in his unsuccessful expedition against the Miami in 1790. He was forced to supplement his Federal troops with militia from Virginia and Pennsylvania, and part of his failure may be attributed to their lack of discipline. His expedition forcibly demonstrated that fighting Indians in the wilderness demanded a special kind of strategy which he had failed to devise. He was removed as commander of the army on March 4, 1791. A board of inquiry in September declared his conduct had been above reproach and absolved him of any negligence. He resigned his commission on January 1, 1792.

John Francis Hamtramck was baptized at Quebec on August 16, 1756. His father was a native of Luxembourg who migrated to Canada. His mother was French Canadian. He joined the Revolutionary army, attaining the rank of brevet major in the New York line. In 1785 he was commissioned captain of a company raised in New York to join Harmar's command, and was elevated to the rank of major on October

20, 1786. He proved a good officer and won the respect and obedience of his men despite his five-foot-five stature. He commanded companies ordered to drive out squatters at the Mingo Bottom near the present Steubenville in Ohio and to afford protection to Capt. Thomas Hutchins, geographer of the United States, who was surveying at the juncture of the western boundary of Pennsylvania and the Ohio River. Hamtramck oversaw the building of the first Fort Steuben at the site of Steubenville. In May, 1787, he joined Harmar at Fort Harmar and proceeded down the Ohio and up the Wabash to Vincennes. He was at Fort Knox at Vincennes for six years. His French Canadian background, his ability to speak French, and the fact that he was a Catholic, were a help to him in dealing with the French of the village. His march up the Wabash as a move to distract the Wabash tribes at the time of Harmar's expedition against the Miami villages in 1790 was only partially successful. His expedition probably diverted the Wabash Indians from joining the Miami, but he did not meet any body of Indians in battle, and therefore was unable to inflict any serious defeat on them. Hamtramck participated in St. Clair's campaign in 1791. In 1793 he attained the rank of lieutenant colonel and was commander of the First Sub-legion under Anthony Wayne. He was relieved at Fort Knox by Capt. Thomas Pasteur in February, 1793, and went to Fort Washington at Cincinnati. When Wayne attacked the confederated tribes at Fallen Timbers in 1794, Hamtramck commanded the left wing of the army. He was placed in command of the fort constructed at the confluence of the St. Joseph and St. Marys rivers, called Fort Wayne. In 1796 he took command at Detroit when the British withdrew, and divided his time thereafter between Fort Wayne and Detroit. It was he who ordered the detachment to construct Fort Dearborn at the mouth of the Chicago River, and thus he may be entitled to be called the "founder of Chicago." He died, however, on April 11, 1803, before the detachment set out.

Though Harmar and Hamtramck both adopted the army for their careers, and had seen service in the Revolution, there was considerable difference in their backgrounds and training. Harmar had been carefully educated. Nothing is known of Hamtramck's schooling. French was his native tongue, and the English of his letters, though usually clear in meaning, is not very grammatical and his spelling is strange. Hamtramck probably found it easier to adapt himself to the conditions of life in a frontier post than did Harmar who had reveled in the society of the European capitals. Despite such differences, in the correspondence presented here the two men appear to have genuine respect for each other, and their letters provide an invaluable source of information on this first effort to extend the authority of the United States to the area that was to become Indiana.*

* There is a sketch of Harmar in the *Dictionary of American Biography,* and, of course, much biographical data in the Harmar Papers in the Clements Library. The best biographical sketch of Hamtramck is by F. Clever Bald, in *Indiana Magazine of History,* XLIV (1948), 335-54.

OUTPOST ON THE WABASH

HARMAR TO THE SECRETARY AT WAR, June 15, 1787

[Letterbook Copy]

CAMP AT THE RAPIDS OF THE OHIO
June 15th 1787

SIR I had the honor of addressing you last on the 7th inst. We arrived on the 11th.

Considering the immense expence which the public would sustain by hiring pack horses, and indeed the uncertainty of procuring them, & the delay attending it; these circumstances have induced me to determine upon going to post St. Vincent by water. I am making arrangements respecting provisions, and propose taking my cattle in Kentucky boats, to the mouth of the Wabash, and shall then order them drove along the margin of the river—ascending the Wabash & driving the cattle will be attended with some difficulty. This arrangement will be infinitely less expensive than marching by land from hence directly to the post; upon a calculation it would require seventy pack horses, which could not be hired under half a dollar each pr day.

I expect Captain Ferguson[1] will arrive about the 20th of the month, and I am in hopes to leave this immediately upon his arrival. When we reach the post, I shall instantly proceed to carry the orders of Congress into effect. The commissioners goods are here;[2] as it is more than probable, that I shall have frequent conferences with the Indians, I propose taking them along with me, and beg as the superintendent of Indian affairs[3] will be absent, that you will be pleased to authorize me to distribute some of them in case of necessity.

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[1] Capt. William Ferguson, of Pennsylvania. For further identification and service records of the officers of the American army that figure herein see Col. William H. Powell (comp.), *List of Officers of the Army of the United States from 1779-1900* . . . (New York, L. R. Hamersly & Co., 1900), and Francis B. Heitman (comp.), *Historical Register of the United States Army from Its Organization, September 29, 1789, to September 29, 1889* (Washington, D. C., 1890).

[2] Goods assigned to the Indian commissioners appointed by Congress to be distributed as gifts to the Indians.

Judge Symmes formerly a member of Congress is here, and has it in contemplation to establish a settlement on the Wabash. I think it my duty to transmit you the enclosed proposals of his, in order that you may be acquainted with his intentions.[4]

You may be assured sir, that the advancement of federal measures shall be my constant object, and I hope for the countenance and support of Congress upon the occasion.

I have the honor to be sir with perfect esteem & respect your most able & obed't serv't

Jos. Harmar
Lt. Com't 1st U. S. Reg't.

The honorable Major General Knox
Secretary at War

[Marginal notes:] Favored pr Mr. Elder in Mr. Wells boat. The boat returned having been fired on by Indians.

Original forwarded the 22d June pr Mr. Will'm Pope to the care of Col. Inness, Danville. Col. Inness delivered this letter to Capt. Lewis Robards at Danville on the 29th June 1787 to be carried to Richmond, and to be put into the post office there.

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[3] Richard Butler, superintendent of Indian affairs for the Northern Department, elected by the Continental Congress to that post, August 14, 1786. *Dictionary of American Biography* (20 volumes plus index. New York, 1937), III, 366.

[4] Transmitted to Congress, August 1, 1787, by Secretary at War Knox. *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789* (34 volumes. Library of Congress ed. Washington, D. C., 1904-37), XXXIII, 448. John Cleves Symmes, who was to be appointed one of the judges of the Northwest Territory, petitioned Congress on August 29, 1787, for a grant of 2,000,000 acres of land, not on the Wabash but on the Ohio River between the Little and Big Miami rivers. The petition was granted conditional to a contract entered into by a group of land speculators headed by Symmes and the

HARMAR TO COL. J. M. P. LE GRAS[1] AND MAJ. FRANÇOIS BOSSERON,[2] June 19, 1787

[Letterbook Copy]

CAMP AT THE RAPIDS OF THE OHIO
June 19th 1787

GENTLEMEN, Altho I have not the honor of being acquainted with you, yet I am induced to address you upon the following subject, from the information given me by Mr. Bartholomew Tardiveau,[3] that you are good friends to the United States.

Government. *Ibid.*, XXXIII, 509; XXXIV, 565; Beverley W. Bond, Jr., *The Foundations of Ohio* (*The History of the State of Ohio*, volume I, Columbus, 1941), p. 272.

[1] Col. Jean Marie Philippe Le Gras, a resident of Vincennes at the time of its capture by George Roger Clark. He quickly espoused the American cause, and when Virginia organized the County of Illinois under John Todd, he was made president of the court, the governing body at Vincennes. He was an acknowledged leader of the community. When the situation at Vincennes grew desperate in the summer of 1786, Le Gras joined in the appeal to Clark for aid against the Indians. He died February 10, 1788. See below, Hamtramck to Harmar, May 21, 1788, and St. Francis Xavier Parish Records, index, Indiana Historical Bureau; James A. James (ed.), *George Rogers Clark Papers 1781-1784* (*Illinois Historical Collections*, XIX, Springfield, 1926), 35n; Leonard C. Helderman, "The Northwest Expedition of George Rogers Clark, 1786-1787," in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXV (1938-39), 323, 324.

[2] Maj. François Bosseron. He, too, was a long-time resident and leader of Vincennes who joined in the appeal to Clark. He died in September, 1791. St. Francis Xavier Parish Records, index, Indiana Historical Bureau; Helderman, "The Northwest Expedition of George Rogers Clark," in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXV, 324. Apparently Bosseron was at this time out of favor with at least some of the inhabitants of Vincennes. See letter from Le Gras immediately below.

[3] Barthélemi Tardiveau, born in 1750 in Nantes, set out for America in 1777, arriving in Philadelphia the following year. As a merchant-trader in Kentucky he supplied the troops of George Rogers Clark in 1781 and was paid by Virginia in tracts of Kentucky land. Remaining in Kentucky after the Revolution he served as interpreter for representatives of the French inhabitants of the Illinois villages in their protests to Virginia over the conduct of the Virginia troops in 1786. He came to Vincennes with Harmar's command, and accompanied Harmar to Kaskaskia and Cahokia, serving as interpreter. He won the respect of Harmar and apparently continued high in the esteem of the French, for he was entrusted by them

Congress hearing of the robberies and outrages committed at Post Vincennes by a set of lawless banditti[4] have ordered me to march with a body of regular troops there, and to assure the French inhabitants, that they shall be protected in their rights. You will please therefore acquaint them of the same.

I would wish you, Gentlemen, to inform the Indians, that the United States wish to live in peace with them, and that they may not be alarmed at this movement; likewise to apprize them of troops being on their way to the Post, not a set of villains but regulars, and sent by the authority of the Grand Council of the Empire, in order to preserve good faith with them, and to protect the legal inhabitants.

I have the honor to be, Gentlemen, your most obdt. servt.,

Jos. Harmar Lt. Col. Com't.
the troops in the service of the United States

Colonel Le Gras & Major Bosseron

[Marginal note:] Pr Matson the pilot

Col. J. M. P. Le Gras to Harmar, June 26, 1787

[Translated from copy in French]

Au post Vincennes 26 June 1787

Monsieur, It is with sincere satisfaction that we received your letter dated June 19. The pleasing hope of having a troop worthy of their commander and of the honorable persons who send them, makes us most eager. The sooner we have you, the sooner will we forget the discomforts that we have suffered, ignorant of what authority we lived under. And we flatter

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and also by some of the American settlers with laying their grievances before the Congress and seeking confirmation of their land claims and compensation for the losses they had sustained from the Virginia troops. Howard C. Rice, *Barthélemi Tardiveau a French Trader in the West . . .* (Institut Français de Washington, *Historical Documents,* Cahier XI, Baltimore, 1938); Clarence W. Alvord (ed.), *Cahokia Records, 1778-1790,* and *Kaskaskia Records, 1778-1790* (*Illinois Historical Collections,* II and V, Springfield, 1907, 1909), indexes under Tardiveau. See also Tardiveau to Hamtramck, August 1, 1790, below.

[4] See Introduction, above.

ourselves that we shall no longer be prey of vagabonds since we are the faithful subjects of the same state. As long as you have asked us concerning the conduct of your march, we are agreed that it will surely be most advantageous to continue your march by water though it will not ward off danger of savage parties. However, as we cannot foresee what might be plotted, we beseech you to act with every precaution in order to avoid surprise, we propose to go down to the Mouth of the Wabash and we shall leave Monday next, accompanied by several friends who are attached as we are to the honor of the United States. It is in the name of all the people who desire you that we have the honor of being sincerely and frankly your very humble and very obedient servant and faithful subject of the United States of America.

Every one unfriendly to the conduct of Mr. Bosseron begs you that his name not appear in our address.

J. M. P. LEGRAS Col.

TO COLONEL HARMAR

Commandant of the troops in the service of the United States on the Ohio

[Endorsed:] Copy of Col. Le Gras's answer to my letter of the [19 June].[1] The original was forwarded in my letter of the 7th August 1787 to the War Office.[2]

[Second endorsement:] Copy of Colonel Le Gras' answer to Colonel Harmar's letter of the 19th June 1787

HARMAR TO COL. J. M. P. LE GRAS, July 10, 1787

[Letterbook Copy]

CAMP EIGHT MILES ABOVE GREEN RIVER
July 10th 1787

SIR, I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th June, c/o Matson the pilot. Major Hamtramck proceeds with a convoy for our provisions & baggage, and will meet you at the mouth of the Wabash.[1] I shall march with the troops in the course of tomorrow for the post, where I hope to have the honor of seeing you shortly.

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[1] The manuscript is blank.

[2] See below, Harmar to Knox, August 7.

With great respect I have the honor to be, sir, your most obed't serv't,

Jos. Harmar Lt. Col. Com't
the troops in the service of the United States

Colonel Legras
at the mouth of the Wabash River
[Marginal note:] honored pr Major Hamtramck

Barthélemi Tardiveau to Harmar, August 6, 1787
[ALS]

Poste Vincennes August 6th 1787.

Col. Jos. Harmar

Dear sir, As the multiplicity and importance of your business does not leave you sufficient leisure to attend to a variety of arrangements which may be advantageous to make for the good of the public; but which, being of less magnitude, have not perhaps as yet attracted your notice, I shall take the liberty to submit to your consideration a few regulations which, I conceive, would be highly conducive to the great ends Congress have proposed themselves, namely; of securing happiness to the inhabitants; protecting private property against arbitrary invasion and the public lands against illegal encroachments; and of removing diffidence, fear, & jealousy from the minds of the Indians.

In order to compass the first of these desirable objects, you have, Sir, already reinstated the magistracy of this poste into its ancient vigour & respectability, the laws, long neglected

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[1] "Major Hamtramck with a captain, two subs [subalterns], a surgeon's mate, four sergeants, four corporals, two musicians and ninety privates is to take charge immediately of the whole fleet, and proceed to the mouth of the Wabash river and thence up it for Post Vincennes. . . ." Order Book of Josiah Harmar No. 2, July 7, 1787. Harmar Papers, William L. Clements Library.

& held in contempt, have at last reassumed their happy sway. Nothing now remains, to compleat your work in this respect, but to extend the influence of the same regular administration of justice to the settlements at Kaskaskia, Cahokia, & Prairie du Rocher. A people governed by just & wholesome laws are not only happy within themselves, but respected by their neighbouring nations. After a period of nine years, marked by all the excesses that can be the result of self-created authority, wanton aggression, and boundless tyranny, it is high time to wash off the stain that the conduct of a lawless mob may, in the eyes of foreigners, have impress'd on the American character. As soon as you are at leisure to establish in that country the same good order that has endear'd you so much to the citizens of this district, our neighbours will be able to draw the line of a just distinction between the legal acts of a respectable nation, and the unwarranted proceedings of an unprincipled multitude.

Many offences of an heinous nature, and bearing the character of public authority, have been committed both at this poste & in the Illinois country, which are not only injurious in the highest degree to individuals but very disgraceful to the people in their collective capacity. The ordinary course of law, it is true, is now open'd to the sufferers; but, besides that their property has been transported away, and they have, of course, very little encouragement for prosecution, criminals of the kind alluded to have not less offended against the social body, and the public virdict seems to me to call loudly for the institution of the office of state's attorney.

In regard to the lands legally obtained, & the encroachments made on others without a sufficient authority, I conceive that a discrimination may be easily ascertained.[1] The rights claimed under the French or English Governors are of two kinds: freeholds, granted for ever, and leases conceded during the office only of the then Governor or Commandant. These last, however, have obtained the sacredness of long possession and ought, in my opinion, to be respected alike with the others. I cou'd wish that no attack were made upon any landed property that had a known owner when this country pass'd under the dominion of Virginia. If the ashes of those old rights, if I may use the expression, be stirr'd up, it may create a great deal of uneasiness, without any real advantage; for they are but few in number, and inconsiderable as to their extent. The conquest of the Illinois & Poste Vincennes by the troops of Virginia forms the true epoch at which grants of land, made since, are liable to inquisition. If that State empower[ed] any of its officers, civil or military, to make concessions, the titles so obtained are umpregnable. People here say that Mr. John Todd, County Lieutenant for this district in 1779 had such powers; and from him are derived all the late rights about which so much noise is made. It can easily be known whether or no he had sufficient authority from his State, and whether or no he delegated that authority to the magistrates. They say he did; but I can hardly believe it, for I have in my possession a letter of him which contradicts it formally. Let this be as it will, there is another aera since which all locations of land are necessarily of no account; and it is when the State of Virginia offer'd to cede to Congress the country over the Ohio which was some time in 82: for, altho' the cession was not accepted of 'till in 84, the State of Virginia cou'd not exercise acts of sovereignty in a country which they had given up, and which it was under consideration with Congress whether they wou'd accept or not.

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[1] For a discussion of land claims and land grants at Vincennes at this time see Leonard Lux, *The Vincennes Donation Lands* (Indiana Historical Society *Publications,* volume XV, number 4, Indianapolis, 1949), Chapter I.

The most difficult part of the business entrusted to your prudence & activity of exertions is the laying the foundation of a durable peace with the Indians. I have, my dear sir, bestowed many serious reflexions upon this important subject; and, altho' my ideas upon it may, perhaps, be misbegotten, I shall not hesitate to communicate them to you.

By some, the moral character of the Indians has been exalted beyond the bounds of truth: by others, I am sensible, it has been unjustly traduced. Whether they are faithless by nature, or whether we made them so, is not the object of the present enquiry. Experience shews us that there are European nations for whom their attachment is seldom, if ever, shaken. When I have reflected upon this circumstance, waving all partial idea of the one being possessed of more honesty in their dealings with the Indians than the other, I thought I wou'd find in their different modes of government the true reason of their different successes.

In such Republicks as the American States, where extensive & far distant frontiers are generally inhabited by a sort of people who are yet to mistake the idea of licentiousness for that of liberty; where the reins of government are slacken'd before they reach the circumference; where administration can not interfere in the private dealings betwixt white & red men; where the only trade, perhaps, that ought to be under strict regulations is in the hands of those who cannot bear any controul, who very seldom act upon principle, who know no other rule but that of a low & sordid interest; in such a country many iniquitous, offensive, exasperating transactions must be expected to take place, which either cannot be prevented by government, or do not come under the cognizance of the laws, or are suffer'd to pass unnoticed because the frontiers inhabitants, being all traders, have all an equal interest in establishing the maxim that "no injury done to an Indian is punishable." Hence, on the part of the savages, tenfold retaliation, and revenge that bears no proportion with the offence. Reciprocal discontent increases every day: distrust grows into acts of violence; dislike into hostilities. But these mutual depredations, tho' very vexatious to individuals, seldom swell to importance enough to interest the dignity of the state and make it a public concern; the infallible consequence of which is, in the Indian, a contemptible idea of the whites and an extravagant conceit of themselves. People of a conciliating disposition have, no doubt, frequently explained to them the difference betwixt the unanimous measures of the nation & the solitary acts of individuals; but my dear sir, how much soever we may despise the Indians, they have very noble notions of order & subordination; and they can hardly be persuaded that the subjects wou'd dare to treat them in a manner that they conceive to be injurious, if government did not countenance them.

Under a more absolute government, the hand of power holds every where the helm with equal steadiness. The Indian trade is reduced into a system; it has its regulations & laws. If an individual maltreats a savage, it is not look'd upon as a private injury, but as a public offence that may endanger the community; and the trader, knowing that he is liable to be punish'd, finds himself under a necessity of being honest.

Led by the above considerations, I am decidedly of opinion that no treaty of peace, likely to be lasting, can be made with the Indians except you are invested with powers energetick enough to keep the whites under subjection & call them to a severe account if, by any misconduct of theirs, differences shou'd arise with the savages; and I think that you ought to lay this matter before Congress.

These principles, by which our intercourse with the Indians ought to be regulated are, in my opinion, applicable in a great degree to the mode of settling a new country, one at least in such circumstances as this district. I am not insensible that it wou'd be impracticable and impolitick throughout any of the American States, to curtail the liberty of the citizens, and introduce, even for a short time, among the settlers on the frontiers, a form of government that had the least shadow of a power independent of, and superior to, the people. But there is not the same degree of impropriety, nor the same danger where that form already exists; and, provided it may appear that there is a necessity for continuing that system in this country, Congress will not meet here with the obstacles which the Republican constitutions of the American States oppose to an absolute authority lodged in the hands of a military officer. I am far from wishing that despotism shou'd, in any part of the globe, be substituted to freedom, and the military law to the forms of Democracy. But I have had many an opportunity of observing that, where a new settlement is made, the manners of the first inhabitants are so uncultivated, their principles so loose, their ideas of liberty so unlimited, the reins of government so slack, the voice of the laws so faint, that it is not till after many years that regularity, order, peace, justice, subjection to legal authority, can take place.—I am convinced, my dear sir, that the good order you have established among the inhabitants will not be of a long duration, if your authority over them is superseded by that of the magistracy. This country may soon swarm with adventurers; and, except they be a better sort than those who commonly migrate to a new settlement, we shall, ere long, feel severely the disturbing operations of their jumbled elections, mob-made magistrates, pack'd juries, and partial laws. Above all, the French inhabitants are not ripe for a free government: their heads have been too long fashioned to despotism, to have any clear idea of civil liberty; if you restore it to them, they will find themselves in an unnatural state from which the consequent transition will be to anarchy and confusion. Cou'd the population of this country be immediately augmented by a number of respectable & well disposed men, I wou'd then be as warm an advocate for a popular government as I am now forcibly inclined to think that we want for some time a military one. Let it not be said that the Americans can not brook it. The settlers at Natchez are all of that nation; and live very happy under the rule of a commandant.

To an officer of your distinguished military talents I shou'd be asham'd to give the most distant hint in that line, if you had not encouraged me to disclose freely my sentiments on all matters of public utility. It is [a] mortifying, but, unfortunately, too well-grounded reflexion, that you are in a very precarious situation in regard to Indian affairs. Your forces are not sufficient to inspire respect;[2] and, altho' you can undertake nothing, you may [MS torn] to disgrace. Many numerous & warlike nations surround you: say they will come & treat of peace; but do not trust too much to their professions of friendship. The object of their visits will be to examine your strength; and, if they discover your weakness, they will harrass you incessantly. If you send out detached parties, you must expect to see them cut off one after another: if you undertake a general & vigorous campaign, the enemy will either disperse & force you to retreat without performing any thing; or meet you with superior advantages in numbers, in cunning, in knowledge of the country: if you remain penn'd up in a manner, in your camp, you will loose among the savages that respectability which it is essential to establish. Your poste at St. Vincennes is, undoubtedly, of great importance; but without strong garrisons at the high lands, & Wyattanons, & Miamee, it will answer nothing. Congress, I am afraid, are not well enough acquainted with this country to be sufficiently sensible of the absolute necessity of occupying those posts, without which the Indians can never be awed or gained over. Too much, or too little, has been done. You had need of at least a thousand more men, two hundred of whom cavalry.

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[2] On June 3, 1784, Congress authorized an army of seven hundred men "to act as a garrison and furnish general protection to the country north of the Ohio," for one year. These were to be raised from the militia of the states of Connecticut (165), New York (165), New Jersey (110), and Pennsylvania (260). On April 12, 1785, the seven hundred were authorized to be continued for three years. James Ripley Jacobs, *The Beginning of the U. S. Army 1783-1812* (Princeton University Press, 1947), pp. 16, 23; *Journals of the Continental Congress,* XXVII, 530-31; XXVIII, 247. But in October, 1788, it was estimated that only 595 soldiers were actually at the frontier posts. *Ibid.,* XXXIV, 579. The number was probably less when Tardiveau was writing.

Before Harmar came out to Vincennes he rearranged his forces. He evacuated old Fort Steuben and withdrew all troops from Fort Pitt leaving only Lieut. Joseph Asheton there with his waiter, and dispatched sixteen men and an officer to Wheeling as an escort for the men surveying the 5th, 6th, and 7th ranges. He described his new arrangement to Secretary at War Knox, June 7, 1787: "At the Rapids of the Ohio [Fort Finney later Steuben], Captain Finney, Captain Zeigler, Captain Strong, Captain Mercer, and Captain Smith, with their companies, and Captain Ferguson, with forty artillerymen and a brass three pounder, making, in the whole, three hundred and twenty-nine men. I shall leave this post [Fort Harmar] to-day or to-morrow, with Major Hamtramck, and shall take the immediate direction and command of this force upon my arrival at the Rapids. I propose to leave written instruction for Major Doughty, upon his arrival to take command in this quarter. At Venango, Captain Heart is stationed; at Fort McIntosh, Lieutenant Ford; at Wheeling, for the protection of the surveyors, Ensign Spear, with sixty men; at Fort Harmar, Major Doughty, with a part of Captain McCurdy's company, and part of Captain Bradford's, which is the remaining part of the regiment." William Henry Smith (ed.), *The St. Clair Papers. The Life and Public Services of Arthur St. Clair . . .* (2 volumes. Cincinnati, 1882), II, 23.

A great deal of mischief arises from a quarter that has been too long overlooked. The merchants at Michilimakinac send yearly a dozen of their factors with stores to Cahokia; those at Detroit are dispers'd throughout this country. If we are good-natur'd enough to see that the English government do not excite the Indians to war, we are too well convinc'd that the merchants, & especially the traders, men of low & interested principles, stop at nothing, and would rather spill rivers of blood than loose the only trade by which they can live. I have known their intrigues with the Indians; I have heard their inflammatory discourses. The nest of [?] incendiaries ought to be broke up.[3]

The militia here deserve hardly the name; not that the men want spirit & resolution, that they are not properly embodied & exercised. Under proper regulations, they might be of infinite service. Their Col. has always been us'd to receive his orders from the Commandant in the past. It might be useful to employ a noncommissioned officer to teach them the [MS illegible] and order a review of part of them every Sunday, a day commonly consecrated to that among the French. You do not know, my dear sir, how soon you may have occasion for their assistance, which [God] forbid!

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[3] For comment on the British policy at this time, see Hamtramck to Harmar, January 1, 1788, and notes, below. Lieut. John Armstrong who accompanied Harmar on his Vincennes expedition wrote to Col. Richard Anderson of Louisville: "I conceive our taking Post in this country will add much to the safety of Kentucky particularly if we can bring the Indians to terms of peace and discharge the British emissaries that are now among them, for I find from enquiry that much of the mischief done in your settlement is by Indians who inhabit this river." Letter of August 8, 1787, written from Vincennes, transcript in John Armstrong Collection, in possession of Charles F. Cochran, La Porte, Indiana.

I shall, from time to time, continue to impart you freely my thoughts on matters of public concern as they occur, convinced that if I err in judgment, you will give me credit for zeal for the general good.

I have the honor to be respectfully, Dear Sir, your very humble Servant,

B: TARDIVEAU

HARMAR TO THE SECRETARY AT WAR, August 7, 1787

[Letterbook Copy]

CAMP AT POST VINCENNES, August 7th 1787

SIR, I had the honor of addressing you last on the 7th ult.[1] from camp on the Kentucky shore, just below the rapids of the Ohio. On the 6th ult. Captain Zeigler[2] with a party & an adequate number of boats, was detached from thence with the provision. On the 8th we embarked with the remainder of the fleet, & arrived on the morning of the 10th at the rocks or the landing and crossing place, called also the Delaware Old Town, about eight miles above Green River, & one hundred & eighty miles below the Rapids. In the afternoon of the same day, I detached Major Hamtramck with a party of one hundred men to conduct the whole fleet from the landing to the mouth of the Wabash, & then ascend the river for Post Vincennes. On the morning of the eleventh, with the residue of the troops, I took up the inclosed order of march with our cattle in the centre; in very warm weather, and the men being obliged to carry fifteen days' flour upon their backs, rendered it very fatiguing. A due north course from the landing & carrying place would have struck the post in fifty miles distance from the Ohio, but we were obliged to oblique for the sake of water.

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[1] This letter is in the Harmar Papers, and excerpts from it are printed in Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 24-26.

[2] Capt. David Zeigler, of Pennsylvania.

On the 16th we forded the White River (a considerable stream) about fifteen miles below the forks, and arrived at Post Vincennes on the 17th at noon.[3] The whole march computed to be about seventy miles. From the Ohio (where we set out) to the White River we had a very difficult march, the country being full of thickets & scarce of water, but afterwards we marched through fine open woods, & large prairies or natural meadows, & encamped on the banks of the Wabash.[4]

On the 18th we were visited by Colonel Legras, the magistrate, & the principal French inhabitants, welcoming us upon our arrival. Their behaviour was most respectfully submissive. In the afternoon of the same day, finding the Wabash

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[3] Harmar encamped on the night of the 17th "near a small stockade erected by Gen. Clarke on the banks of the Wabash." The next day the encampment was removed "about a quarter of a mile higher up the Wabash." This latter site was probably at the foot of Buntin Street, the location of the garrison which Hamtramck was to build and which Harmar named Fort Knox. Diary of Josiah Harmar, July 17 and 18, 1787, in Harmar Papers. See also below, pp. 108, 138, and "A Plan of the Borough of Vincennes in the Indiana Territory as established by an Ordinance of the Trustees . . . 18th November 1816," by Robert Buntin, surveyor, photostat in Indiana Division, Indiana State Library. This plan shows the site of Fort Sackville on the river at the foot of Church Street, and the site of Fort Knox up the river at the foot of Buntin Street.

[4] Lieut. John Armstrong, a member of the expedition, wrote from Vincennes to his friend Col. Richard C. Anderson in Louisville, August 8, 1787, "Our march from the Ohio to this place was a disagreeable one. The weather being warm we suffered much for want of water, marching sometimes eight and ten miles without a drink. The country which we passed is and ever will be a desert." Transcript in John Armstrong Collection in possession of Charles F. Cochran, La Porte. For another account of an overland journey to Vincennes by Armstrong, see below, pp. 143-44.

Two of the soldiers who accompanied Harmar on his Vincennes expedition left diary accounts which have been published. "Military Journal of Major Ebenezer Denny," in *Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania,* VII (Philadelphia, 1860), 303-5, and the journal of Joseph Buell quoted in Samuel P. Hildreth, *Pioneer History: Being an Account of the First Examinations of the Ohio Valley . . .* (Cincinnati, 1848), 154-58.

River so low & difficult to ascend, I detached a serjeant & twenty men in three barges & five pettiaugers to meet Major Hamtramck, & lighten the fleet.

Post Vincennes is a very considerable village situated upon the Wabash, about one hundred & twenty miles from the mouth; it contains near four hundred houses (log & bark) out houses, barns &c. The number of the inhabitants about nine hundred (souls) French, and about four hundred (souls) Americans. Monsieur Vincennes, the French officer from whom it derives its name, I am informed was here & commenced the settlement sixty years ago.

On the 20th I called upon Colonel Legras for a sight of the French grants & all other papers respecting the original settlers. The papers were produced but I declined having a translation of them until the arrival of Mr. Bartholomew Tardiveau, a French gentleman who was with Major Hamtramck in the fleet, well acquainted with the inhabitants & the footing they held their lands upon. I expected his arrival every day.

Major Hamtramck did not arrive with the boats until the 25th, having been eleven days on very severe fatiguing duty ascending the Wabash. He was obliged to leave Ensign Ryker Sedam[5] with a party with the clothing, all the whiskey & chief part of the flour at the mouth of the Wabash, the water being so shoal that the boats could not ascend the river.

On the 26th I detached Lieut. Armstrong[6] with a party of forty five fresh men in several perrogues to join Ensign Sedam & assist in bringing up the provisions & our new clothing which was left behind at the mouth of the river.

On the 27th the resolve of Congress respecting the intruders on the public lands[7] together with my orders, were published in English & French which amazed the inhabitants exceedingly, particularly those who stile themselves Americans. A copy of the said resolve & the orders relative thereto I do myself the honor to enclose.

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[5] Ens. Cornelius Ryker Sedam, of New Jersey.

[6] Lieut. John Armstrong, of Pennsylvania. For Armstrong's account of this tour of duty see his letter to Harmar of August 8, below.

[7] On September 22, 1783, Congress issued a proclamation prohibiting and forbidding "all persons from making settlements on lands inhabited or claimed by Indians, without the limits or jurisdiction of any particular State, and from purchasing or receiving any gift or cession of such lands or

On the 28th eight Piankeshaw Indians arrived from the *Terre haut* up the Wabash in consequence of Colonel Legras information to them of the troops coming to the post. On the 29th I had a conference with them & presented them with 13 strings of wampum, and assured them of the friendly disposition of the United States, & advised them not to listen to what any bad people might say to the contrary. I sent a message by these Indians to all the chiefs of the different tribes on the Wabash, inviting them to assemble here & hear what I had to say to them. These Indians were well pleased, they presented me with a calumet. I gave them some small presents, and they set off on the 31st to deliver my message to the different chiefs. The French inhabitants at the same time sent a speech to them, a copy of which I have the honor to enclose.[8]

On the 5th instant, Lieut. Armstrong & Ensign Sedam arrived with the stores, clothing, &c from the mouth of the Wabash, after a very fatiguing dangerous passage. Several parties of Indians were hovering about the Wabash, they waylaid a canoe on the 25th ult. which had fell in the rear at what is called the Long Rapid, on board of which was some flour & whiskey, private property belonging to our guide; they killed one of Captain Zeigler's company, & a French man & took prisoner one of the men whom I had enlisted for one year.[9] I informed the Indians of this circumstance & to tell their chiefs that if they did not desist, they would certainly draw upon them the vengeance of the United States. They disavowed in strong terms any knowledge of this murder.

claims without the express authority and direction of the United States in Congress assembled." *Journals of the Continental Congress,* XXV, 602.

[8] In the Harmar Papers, there is a speech of Colonel Le Gras addressed to all the Indian Nations on the Wabash. There is an endorsement that a copy was forwarded to Knox in Harmar's letter of August 7.

[9] John Siddon, who later escaped. See below, Harmar to Hamtramck, July 26, 1788, and note.

I humbly conceive that the great objects I have to attend to, will be to prevent illegal encroachments on the public lands, to secure happiness to the inhabitants, and to protect private property from arbitrary invasion, and to remove if possible, diffidence, fear & jealousy from the minds of the Indians; to these points I shall bend my attention.

I have been busily employed with the aid of Mr. Tardiveau, in order to make a discrimination between the lands legally obtained, & those that have been encroached upon without sufficient authority. The French inhabitants are about framing a humble petition to Congress, and will, I believe, give up their charter, and trust to Congress for what lands that honorable body may please to grant them.[10] Such American inhabitants as have settled under the French charter, are also framing a petition to Congress praying for relief, and they will be recommended by the French.[11] As there are no intruders out of the village, I shall wait for these petitions & inclose them to the war office and altho the first of September is the given period for them to depart, as I cannot yet possibly ascertain who are actually intruders, I shall not proceed to expel them until their petitions are sent on, & their fate determined, and I receive orders from Congress or the war office upon the subject. Both parties will appoint Mr. Bartholomew Tardiveau as their agent. He will go on to Congress in the course of next month. As the Indian chiefs (if they come at all) will not be here in less than a month, I propose to take a subaltern's guard, and to proceed to Kaskaskias in company with Mr. Tardiveau the next day after tomorrow, in order that I may be enabled to give a statement of affairs in that part of the United States.

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[10] This petition is printed in Clarence E. Carter (ed.), *The Territorial Papers of the United States* (volume 2- , Washington, D. C., 1934-), II, 58-60. It was signed on behalf of the inhabitants of Post Vincennes by J. M. P. Le Gras, first magistrate, Pierre Gamelin, magistrate, and Nicholas Perrot, magistrate.

[11] This petition is printed in *ibid.*, I, 66-67. It is signed by Bartholomew Tardiveau as agent.

Be pleased to receive the enclosed duplicate receipt for the full sum of one thousand dollars contingent money, likewise a monthly return of the regiment dated the first instant.

This movement of the troops will have a peculiar good effect. It will deter several people from Kentucky & other parts from taking up the public lands. A door was opening very fast for intrusion from that quarter. Many of General Clark's militia on their march towards the Vermillion Town had cast their eye on choice land, and I am informed had made what they call tomahawk rights.

Be pleased to receive the following enclosures vizt.,

No. 1. Col. Legras's answer in behalf of the inhabitants at Post Vincennes to Col. Harmar's letter of the 19th June.[12]

2. The address of the French inhabitants at Post Vincennes to Col. Harmar.[13]

3. The address of the American inhabitants at Post Vincennes to Colonel Harmar.[14]

4. The recommendation of the French inhabitants to Colonel Harmar in favor of the American inhabitants.[15]

The petitions of both the French & American inhabitants to Congress I have not yet received.[16] They shall be forwarded by Mr. Tardiveau.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th June, enclosing the contract of Mr. Ohara,[17] with the Board of Treasury for the supply of the troops &c. Mr. Pemberton has written to me on the 9th June inclosing a duplicate of the aforesaid letter, with the several enclosures which I have received.

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[12] See above Le Gras to Harmar, June 26. [13] See below.

[14] This is printed in Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers,* II, 65.

[15] No copy of this was located.

[16] The French petition, as mentioned above, and the American petition are printed in Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers,* II, 58-63, 66-67.

[17] James O'Hara of Pittsburgh, who became contractor in 1787 and continued through June, 1788. Under this contract O'Hara furnished a ration consisting of one pound of beef or 3/4 pound of pork, one pound of bread or flour, one gill of rum, and 1/100 of one quart of salt, 1/100 of two quarts of vinegar, 1/100 of two pounds of soap, and 1/100 of one pound of candles, for prices varying between "9 1/4 ninetieths of a dollar" and "14 ninetieths of a dollar," depending upon the post to which the rations were sent. The posts mentioned in the contract were Forts Pitt, McIntosh, Harmar, Venango (Franklin), and Steuben at the Rapids of the Ohio. The cost of supplying the garrison established at Vincennes was probably higher. *Journals of the Continental Congress,* XXXIV, 585.

I have the honor to be, sir, with perfect esteem & respect your most h'ble & obed't serv't,

Jos. Harmar
Lt. Col. Com't 1st U. S. R.

The honorable Major Gen'l Knox, Secretary at War

[Marginal notes:] Favored pr Capt. Mason, to the particular care of Ensign Kingsbury[18] at the Rapids of the Ohio. Original forwarded through the wilderness. Duplicate forwarded pr. Mr. Wells the 9th Oct. in a light boat.

[Enclosure-Copy]

Sir

Impressed with a respectfull sence of our duty and anticipating, from our present happy situation under your equitable government, the blessings which it promises to pour upon us, we take this opportunity of expressing our heart-felt satisfaction at finding ourselves at last under the wings of a mild and protecting administration, after having, for so long a time, been the wretched slaves of barbarous and unrelenting tyranny. Our hopes, sir, have not been deceived; and we are confident that we shall continue to find in you the benevolent commandant, the impartial magistrate, the compassionate friend. We beg of you to be well convinced that the inhabitants of this district are submissive to the just laws of the land, respectful to the authority set above them, and always ready cheerfully to acquiesce in every public measure dictated by a wise, moderate liberal government. Your's sir, hitherto has gladened our hearts, long ago shut to the sense of happiness; we hope that nothing shall be wanting on our side to make you rejoice in ruling over such dutiful subjects as it has been our pride to approve ourselves.

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[18] Ens. Jacob Kingsbury, of Connecticut.

We beg leave, sir, to transmit to you our humble petition to the honorable Congress and flatter ourselves that you will be pleased to give it your support and countenance, fully persuaded that, under so reputable a patronage it cannot fail of meeting with that favorable reception which our own want of importance cannot secure it.

We have the honor to be very respectfully sir, your most humble servants

THE INHABITANTS OF POST VINCENNES

POST VINCENNES
July 28, 1787

COL. JOS. HARMAR
Comm't the troops of the United States

[Endorsed:] (Copy)

The original was transmitted to the War office in my letter of the 7th August 1787

LIEUT. JOHN ARMSTRONG TO HARMAR, August 8, 1787

[ALS]

POST VIN[C]ENT 8th August 1787

SIR, Agreeably to your order of the 26 ultimo[1] I sit out with the party under my command in the evening.[2] On the 27 in the morning I arrived at the Grand Rapids where I buried two men who had been killed the day before by the Indians. One of those unfortunate men had 21 arrows sticking in his body, his nose cut off and other marks of savege cruelty. Out of one of the boats sticking on the rapids I took part of a cask whisky for the use of my party. I then proceeded a few miles down the river where I met four Spaniards in a perouge. Those men informed me that the day before a party of Indians of different tribes brought them too and took some flour from them. Their party consisted of about forty and were commanded by one Monture who they knew. He informed them that some of his party had been down at the mouth of the river and that he was then going down to attack Ensign Sedam. When I informed the Spaniards of the men being killed above, they left their boat and proceeded with me to the mouth of the river where I arrived on the evening of the 28th having rowed that day ninety miles. On the 29 my party were imployed in preparing poles paddles &c on the 30th three perouges arrived for Mr. Britt.[8] The men on being informed he was upwards of a hundred miles down the Ohio refused going any further With dificulty I prevailed on two of them to carry to Mr. Britt a letter in which I advised him to proceed to the Missippii and endeavour to get his cargo taken up that river, directing him to take the soldiers he had on board round with him and have them sent to the regiment as soon as posible. The remaining two perouges with my boats were then loaded. I proceeded 9 miles up the river. My cargo consisted of five boxes of cloathing, ninety barrels of flour, thirty two kegs ditto, nineteen barrels of whisky, twenty three kegs ditto, 4 boxes of millatary stores, one barrel butter, one ditto of beer & one box soap.

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[1] See Harmar to Knox, above, August 7. For Harmar's report of this expedition, see above, same letter.

[2] Armstrong wrote to his friend Col. Richard C. Anderson in Louisville (August 8, 1787): "On this tour I experienced every fatigue attending the military character. It appears from the different strong parties of Indians seen on the river that they must have had information of our coming to this country and taken those positions in order to defeat any parties that might come up the river. . . . Knowing the mode of warfare with the Indians was to seek advantages and attack only when they had a prospect of conquering without the loss of any on their side, I took such precautions as to leave no advantage of this kind. In two places where they had taken post I landed the whole of my troops in order to dislodge [?] them. Seeing this they retreated. . . ." Transcript in John Armstrong Collection in possession of Charles F. Cochran, La Porte.

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[8] Daniel Britt. He was bringing supplies from Turnbull, Marmie & Company, who had the contract to supply rations to the army through June, 1787. These supplies were to have gone to Vincennes under Harmar's command, but they arrived too late. Britt was left with six soldiers at the Falls of the Ohio and ordered to proceed to Vincennes as soon as possible. Going down the Ohio he passed the mouth of the Wabash without realizing it and was forced to continue down to the Mississippi and up that stream to Kaskaskia where he disposed of his cargo. He finally reached Vincennes September 15. "Military Journal of Major Ebenezer Denny," in *Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania,* VII, 303, 307, 311; Harmar to Knox, June 15, 1788, below. Before Britt's tardy arrival Harmar, through John Bradshaw, the contractor's agent at the Falls, had procured from Kentucky four months' provision for three hundred men. Harmar to David Duncan, associate of O'Hara at Pittsburgh, July 6, 1787, and Harmar to William Turnbull, October 3, 1788. Harmar Papers.

On the 31 I sunk the large keel boat in the mouth of the little Wabash 12 miles from the Ohio and proceeded 21 miles. August 1st passed the grand chain and proceeded 42 miles. At this place as well as all others where were high or the channel ran near the shore I landed my troops and sent a party on shore untill my boats passed. On the 2d passed Fox Creek and the Great Bend. At the latter I sent Mr. Spring with four men to reconitre the banks. They got lost which detained me some hours. This day I went only 20 miles. On the 3d about 12 O Clock met four perouges on board of which I found Mr. Spring & party who had traveled all night. One of the keel boats springing a leak and having no materials to repair her, I was obliged to imploy one of the Perouges to take her lading on board. I then proceeded 35 miles to Coffee Island. 4th passed the Grand Rapids and proceeded 18 miles. 5th passed three rapids about 9 O Clock. Met the Detachment under the command of Major Hamtramck 18 miles from this place where I arrived about five o'clock. I came this day 25 miles. I met no unexpected dificulties on my passage. From the many signs of Indians on the shore I am convinced there are several large parties on the river.

As the party under my command laboured hard I found it necessary to allow the party an extra gill of whisky pr day & one day from their great exertions in going down I gave them two extra gills. A white child delivered [to] me at the mouth of the river whose parents were killed by the Indians was allowed a ration. Not having a supply of meat for the men I had the necessary supply of provisions issued them on account, a return of which I inclose. The Indians who accompanied me from this place as a hunting party left me at the mouth of the Little Wabash & I have not seen them since. I hope sir my conduct during this command will meet your approbation.

I am sir with every respect your obdt. servt,

JOHN ARMSTRONG, Lieut.
1st U. S. Army

COL. HARMAR

[Addressed:] Josiah Harmar Esqr. Lieut. Col. Commandant

[Endorsed:] Report on his Command down the Wabash river August 8th 1787

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, November 3, 1787

[ALS]

POSTE VINCENNES
Novemb'r the 3d 1787

DEAR SIR Since your departure from us[1] nothing extraordinary has hapened. I have been told of many Shawness Indians being out for war but have not yet hear of their success, and as they have no other mode of geting their leaving I have send them an invitation to come and hunt in our neighborhood to divert them from depredation on the frontiers.

The building of our garrison comes on but very slow, owing to the great scarcity and difficulties of obtaining the timber. Our civil administration has been and is in great confusion. Many poeple are displeased with the magistrates. How it will go at the next election which is to be the 2d of Decemb'r I know not. But it is to be hoped that Congress will soon establish some mode of goverment for I never saw so injudicious administration. Application has repeatedly been made to me for redress. I have avoided to give answer not knowing how far my power extended. In my opinion the Minister at War should have that matter determined and sincerely beg you would push it. I confess to you that I have been very much at lost how to act on many occassion.[2]

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[1] Harmar left Vincennes October 1. See his letter to Knox, November 24, 1787, below.

On examining the remaining debts that were contracted at this place last summer, it would be necessary that I should have (above my carculated supply) about 20 B of flour to discharge them.

Major Finley[3] has promised me that he would send provision to serve until the first of May, but your assistance will be very much wanted. By a man who was going up the river I have informed the Wabash Indians of the treaty that is to be at Pittsburgh.[4]

Ever since Major Wyllys[5] left me which is a month this day and who took all the beef with him, I have supply the garrison with meat; one cow excepted that the contractor has furnished. You see sir my situation and how I am treated. My position is a very remote one, and my dependences very uncertain. If the cattle do not arrive soon the troops will have to be without meat, for my credit will fail and the poeple of the twon will begin to think that we are a second Wabash Regiment.

I have the honor to inclose the returns of the garrison.[6] I would have had the returns of the troops disgerted [digested?] into one, but I declair I am so much fatigued writing that I can not do it my self, and all the officers are in the woods. The feaver has at last left me. But I am very weak.

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[2] See below, pp. 74-75, for Hamtramck's "Regulations for the Court of Vincennes."

[3] Maj. John Finley who operated at the Falls of the Ohio. He was associated with David Duncan in furnishing supplies for the contractors to the army. Harmar to Duncan, July 6, 1787, Harmar Papers.

[4] No treaty was held at Pittsburgh. The next treaty with the Indians was that concluded at Fort Harmar in January, 1789. See below, Harmar to Hamtramck, February 15, 1789, p. 152.

[5] Maj. John Palsgrave Wyllys, commandant at Fort Steuben at the Falls of the Ohio.

[6] None of the muster rolls and related papers of the garrison at Vincennes which Hamtramck sent to Harmar are in the Harmar Papers.

Mr. Pratt[7] neglected to give me (before he went away) some wampum. I will be very much oblige to you to send me some. I also inclose a return of our provision on hand.[8]

Will you be so good as to present my best respects to Mrs. Harmar, and to present my compliments to Maj. Doughty—and the Gent of Muskingum, and permit me to assure you that it is with every sentiment of respect and very great estime, that I have the honor to be your very humble servent

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

N. B. About three hours ago a Chawness Indian come to me and informs me that they never received your invitation last summer.[9] Also about one houre ago two peroges arrived from Detroit. Nothing new.

[Endorsed:] Major Hamtramck from Post Vincennes November 3rd 1787. Answered July 26, 1788.

HARMAR TO THE SECRETARY AT WAR, November 24, 1787

[Letterbook Copy]

FORT HARMAR AT THE MOUTH OF MUSKINGUM
November 24th, 1787

SIR, I had the honor of addressing you last from Camp at Post Vincennes on the 7th August. The original was forwarded from Louisville through the wilderness, and a duplicate forwarded from the rapids of the Ohio up the river to Pittsburg. I hope they have safe arrived.

In my last letter, after having published in French & English the Resolve of Congress respecting the intruders upon the public lands at Post Vincennes, together with my orders relative thereto, and after having sent messages to the several Indian chiefs on the Wabash to assemble at the post, & hear what I had to say to them; as there was no probability of these chiefs coming in, in less than a month, I informed you that it was my intention to employ that time in visiting Kaskaskias, in order that I might be enabled to render a statement of affairs in that part of the United States.

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[7] Lieut. John Pratt, of Connecticut.

[8] Not found.

[9] Mentioned above, Harmar to Knox, August 7.

Accordingly I marched on the 9th of August from the post, with a subaltern (Ensign McDowell[1]) & thirty men through the prairies, and arrived at Kaskaskias on the 16th of the same month. Our march was very fatiguing, as the weather was excessive warm, and water very bad & scarce on our route. The distance is about 160 miles. The French call it 60 leagues. I was accompanied by two Indians (Pacahn, a Miami chief,[2] & his comrade), who hunted & supplied the party with meat (Buffalo & deer) both on the march and on our return.

These prairies are very extensive natural meadows, covered with long grass. One in particular which we crossed was eight leagues in breadth. They run in general North to South, and, like the ocean, as far as the eye can see, the view is terminated by the horizon. Here and there a copse of woods is interspersed. They are free from bush & underwood, and not the least vestige of their ever having been cultivated. The country is excellent for grazing, and abounds in buffalo, deer, bear, etc. It is a matter of speculation to account for the formation of the prairies. The western side of the Wabash is overflown in the spring for several miles.

On the 17th I was visited by the magistrates & principal inhabitants of Kaskaskia welcoming us upon our arrival. *Baptiste de Coigne,* the chief of the Kaskaskias Indians,[3] paid me a visit in the afternoon, and delivered me a speech, expressive of the greatest friendship for the United States, and presented me with one of the calumets, or pipes of peace, which is now sent on. Some of the Pioria Indians likewise visited me. The Kaskaskias, Piorias, Cahokias, and Mitchi[4] tribes compose the Illinois Indians. They are almost extinct at present, not exceeding forty or fifty total. Kaskaskias is a handsome little village, situated on the river of the same name, which empties into the Mississippi at two leagues distance from it. It is one hundred and five miles up the Mississippi from the mouth of the Ohio. The situation is low and unhealthy, and subject to inundation. The inhabitants are French, and much of the same class as those at post Vincennes. Their number is 191 old men & young.

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[1] Ens. Nathan McDowell, of Pennsylvania.

[2] Whether or not this is the chief who succeeded Little Turtle as the great chief of the Miami is not certain. "Pucan" and "Pacan" signed treaties with the United States in 1809, "Pecon" signed the second Treaty of Greenville in 1814, and "Pacan" a treaty the following year, undoubtedly all the same Indian. *Biographical Memoirs of Huntington County, Ind. . . .* (Chicago: B. F. Bowen, Publisher, 1901), pp. 220, 225-26; Charles F. Kappler (ed.), *Indian Affairs. Laws and Treaties* (2 volumes. Washington, D. C., 1904), II, 102, 103, 106, 119.

[3] For sketch, see below, p. 197n.

Having but very little time to spare, I left Ensign McDowell with the party at Kaskaskias, and on the 18th, set out accompanied by Mr. Tardiveau and the gentlemen of the village, for Cahokia. We gained *Prairie du Rocher,* a small village 5 French leagues distant from Kaskaskias, where we halted for the night. On the 19th we passed through St. Philip, a trifling village three leagues distant from *Prairie du Rocher,* and dined at La Belle Fontain, six leagues further. La Belle Fontain is a small stockade inhabited altogether by Americans, who have seated themselves there without authority.[5] It is a beautiful situation, fine fertile land, no taxation, and the inhabitants have abundance to live upon. They were exceedingly alarmed when I informed them of their precarious state respecting a title to their possessions, & have now sent on a petition to Congress by Mr. Tardiveau.[6] On the same day we passed another small stockade, *Grand Ruisseau,* inhabited by the same sort of Americans as those at La Belle Fontain, and arrived at Cahokia that evening.

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[4] Probably the Michigamea. *The Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico* (U. S. Bureau of American Ethnology, *Bulletin 30,* 2 parts, Washington, D. C., 1907, 1910), pt. 1, p. 597, defines the Illinois as a confederacy of Algonquian tribes, comprising the Cahokia, Kaskaskia, Michigamea, Moingwena, Peoria, and Tamaroa.

[5] This settlement was made by a group of Americans "a few years" before 1782. In that year the inhabitants petitioned the court of the District of Kaskaskia for some form of civil government. Alvord (ed.), *Kaskaskia Records,* p. 294.

Cahokia is a village of nearly the same size as that of Kaskaskias & inhabited by the same kind of people. Their number 239 old men and young. I was received with the greatest hospitality by the inhabitants. There was a decent submission & respect in their behavior. Cahokia is distant from Kaskaskias 22 French leagues which is about 50 miles.

On the 21st, in consequence of an invitation from Monsieur Cruzat,[7] the Spanish commandant at St. Louis, we crossed the Mississippi & were very politely entertained by him. After dinner we returned to Cahokia. St. Louis (nicknamed *Pancour*), is much the handsomest & genteelest village I have seen on the Mississippi. It is about 4 miles distant from Cahokia, & 5 leagues above it the River Missouri unites with the Mississippi. The inhabitants are of the same sort as before described, excepting that they are more wealthy. About 20 regular Spanish troops are stationed here.

On the 22nd I left Cahokia to return to Kaskaskia. Previous to my departure, at the request of the inhabitants I assembled them & gave them advice to place their militia upon a more respectable footing than it was, to abide by the decision of their courts, etc., and if there were any turbulent or refractory persons, to put them under guard until Congress should be pleased to order a government for them. Exclusive of the intruders already described, there are about thirty more Americans settled on the rich fertile bottoms on the Mississippi, who are likewise petitioning by this conveyance.

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[6] Tardiveau was designated by both the French of Kaskaskia and Cahokia and the Americans at Kaskaskia and other settlements in the Illinois country to intercede in their behalf with Congress. See the contract drawn between the French inhabitants and Tardiveau, August 27, 1787, in *ibid.,* pp. 440-43, and between the Americans and Tardiveau, in *ibid.,* 443-45. His contract with the inhabitants of Cahokia is given in Alvord (ed.), *Cahokia Records,* pp. 591-93. The petition to Congress by the American inhabitants of the Illinois country is printed in Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers,* II, 68-70.

[7] Francisco Cruzat, commandant at St. Louis. He came there in 1775 and was replaced by Manuel Perez in November, 1787. Louis Houck, *A History of Missouri . . .* (3 volumes. Chicago, 1908), I, 303, 312.

On the 23rd I passed by the ruins of Fort Chartres,[8] which is one league above the Prairie du Rocher & situate on the Mississippi. It was built of stone, and must have been a considerable fortification formerly, but the part next the river had been carried away by the floods & is of no consequence at present. I staid about a quarter of an hour, but had not time to view it minutely, as it was all a thicket within. Several iron pieces of cannon are here at present, & also at the different villages. This evening I returned to Kaskaskia.

On the 24th, Monsieur Peruse,[9] the Spanish commandant at St. Genevieve, sent me an invitation to pay him a visit. We crossed the Mississippi accordingly, were politely entertained & after dinner returned to Kaskaskias. St. Genevieve (nicknamed *Misere*) is a village much inferior in every respect to St. Louis. It is about four miles (including the passage of the Mississippi) distant from Kaskaskias. About eight or ten regular Spanish troops are stationed there. On the 26th, at the request of the inhabitants[10] (which is enclosed) I assembled them, & gave them advice to regulate their militia, & obey their magistrates &c until Congress should be pleased to order a government for them. I have to remark that all these people are entirely unacquainted with what Americans call liberty. Trial by jury, &c, they are strangers to. A commandant with a few troops to give them orders is the best form of government for them; it is what they have been accustomed to.

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[8] This fort on the left bank of the Mississippi was built about eighteen miles above Kaskaskia in 1756. It was evacuated by the French in July, 1765, and thereafter occupied by the British, then allowed to fall into ruins. It had been an elaborate fortification, approximately 415 feet long, with walls of stone and plaster two feet thick and fifteen feet high enclosing an irregular quadrangle with four bastions. Buildings within the walls included the commandant's and commissary's houses, the magazine of stores, guardhouse, and two lines of barracks. John B. Dillon, *A History of Indiana . . .* (Indianapolis, 1859), pp. 82-83, citing description by James Hall. The fort has been reconstructed by the State of Illinois.

[9] Henri Peyroux de la Coudrienne, who became post commandant at Ste. Genevieve, April 20, 1787. He was instructed particularly to look out for information "as to the movement of troops of the United States, and to inform the governor promptly." Houck, *A History of Missouri,* I, 347.

On the 27th, I left Kaskaskias, after having received every mark of respect and attention from the inhabitants, in order to set out for the post. We marched by a lower route; several of the French, and the Kaskaskias chief with his tribe (about ten in number), accompanied us, and we arrived safe at Post Vincennes on the afternoon of the 3rd of September. I made the distance by the lower route to be about 170 miles.

On the 5th the Piankishaw and Weea Indians arrived at the Post from up the Wabash, to the number of about 120. Every precaution was taken. We had a fortified camp, two redoubts were thrown up on our right & left, & the guard in front entrenched. The troops were all new clothed, and made a truly military appearance. The Indians saluted us by firing several vollies on the Wabash, opposite our camp. Their salute was returned by a party of ours firing several platoons.

I was determined to impress upon them as much as possible the majesty of the United States, and at the same time that they were informed that it was the wish of Congress to live in peace & friendship with them, likewise to let them know that if they persisted in being hostile that a body of troops would march to their towns and sweep them off the face of the earth.

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[10] The letter from the magistrates of Kaskaskia to Harmar, August 25, 1787, is printed in Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers,* II, 67-68. "We are certain Sir," the magistrates wrote, "that if you will assemble the people previous to your departure, and in their presence recommend to them obedience to the Laws, and a proper respect to the Magistrates, that we shall have the satisfaction yet to see justice, peace, union and happiness reigning among us."

On the 7th I invited them to camp & made the enclosed speech to them. The Indians admired the troops. I believe they had never seen such a sight before.

On the 8th they answered by speech, and in strong figurative language expressed their determination to preserve perfect peace and friendship with the United States, as long as the waters flowed, &c. They utterly disavowed any knowledge of the murder that had been committed, and assured me that enquiry should be made for the prisoner.[11] They presented me with a number of calumets & wampum, which I now have the honor of transmitting to you enclosed in a rich otter skin; they will be delivered by Mr. Coudre.[12] Mr. Coudre has acted as volunteer for a considerable time in the Regiment, and has conducted himself with propriety. If a vacancy should happen in the Connecticut quota, I beg leave to recommend him to your notice.

On the 9th, the young warriors were drinking whiskey and dancing before our tents all the morning, to demonstrate their joy. On the 10th, I made them several presents from the commissioner's goods, to no great amount. On the 12th the chief part of them left the post for their different villages up the Wabash. They returned highly satisfied with the treatment they received. Indeed it was a proper tour of fatigue for me. I found it politic to pay the greatest attention to them. They are amazing fond of whiskey, and destroyed a considerable quantity of it. I trust that you may find this conference with the Indians attended with very little expence. I question whether the whole, provision whiskey & presents, will cost the public more than 150 dollars. Their interpreter[13] is a half Frenchman and married to a Weea squaw. He has very great influence among them. I judged it necessary to pay extraordinary attention to him.

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[11] See above, Harmar to Knox, August 7.

[12] John Coudray?

[13] Probably Jean Baptiste Constant. See Hamtramck to Harmar, August 12, 1788, below.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of several letters from you, which I shall fully answer by the next conveyance, particularly one of the 2d August, enclosing me a brevet commission of brigadier-general.[14] The favorable point of view in which you have been pleased to place my services before Congress, demands my warmest thanks—your friendship shall ever be held in most grateful remembrance.

After finishing the conference with the Indians & obtaining the enclosed petition of the inhabitants of Post Vincennes to Congress,[15] relinquishing their charter & trusting to the generosity of that honorable body, I judged it expedient to leave a garrison at the post, as it would have been impolitic after the parade we had made, to entirely abandon the country.[16] Accordingly, Major Hamtramck commands there. His command consists of Captain Smith's[17] company, 55, & part of Captain Ferguson's company, 40; total 95. I have ordered him to fortify himself, and to regulate the militia, who are to join him in case of hostilities.

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[14] Upon the recommendation of the Secretary at War Congress had resolved on July 31, 1787: "That the Secretary at War transmit to Lieutenant Colonel Commandant Harmar a brevet commission of brigadier general, and that he be allowed the emoluments but not the pay of the said rank, the allowance to commence with and continue during his command on the frontiers." *Journals of the Continental Congress,* XXXIII, 440. The value of the additional emolument Harmar would receive amounted to $36.00 a month. His monthly pay as lieutenant colonel was $50.00. *Ibid.,* XXVIII, 248; XXXIII, 437. When Knox transmitted a copy of the resolution to Harmar, he wrote, "Should any militia now be united with you there will be no danger of any dispute of rank." Letter of August 2, 1787. Harmar Papers.

[15] This is the petition referred to above which is printed in Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers,* II, 66-67.

[16] On May 7 Knox had written to Harmar, "If you should proceed to St. Vincents you will be able to decide with precision whether a permanent military post ought to be established at that place. The leading motive to the determination will be, the consideration whether such a measure would be satisfactory to the indians—and the former inhabitants; the security in case of hostility—how circumstanced to restrain the intrusion of lawless people—the facility and certainty with which the garrison could be supplied with provisions, and the price of a ration. If on enquiry into these subjects the result should be highly favorable to the establishment of a company there, you are hereby authorized to establish a post and garrison accordingly." Harmar Papers.

[17] Capt. John Smith, of Massachusetts, entered the army from New York.

You are pleased to ask my opinion of the price of the ration at the post. I conceive the contractors could afford it for the same price there as at the falls, provided the troops bring it on, otherwise they can not, as the expence of transportation & hiring of hands &c is considerable. In the month of September I had no less than 96 sick present.

Having arranged all matters to my satisfaction, as we had a long and tiresome voyage before us, I began to think of winter quarters. Accordingly, on the 1st October I marched by land with the well men of Captain Zeigler's & Captain Strong's[18] companies (total 71) for the Rapids of the Ohio. I gave orders to Major Wyllys to command the fleet & to embark for the Rapids the next morning, with the late Captain Finney's[19] & Captain Mercer's[20] companies & the sick of the other companies, and a brass three pounder. I omitted to mention of my taking into our possession some ordnance & ammunition (public property) at Louisville and at the post. At the former we got a brass six pounder with several swivels; at the latter, from Dr. Dalton,[21] two brass three pounders. I thought it best that the public property should be under our own charge.

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[18] Capt. David Strong, of Connecticut.

[19] Capt. Walter Finney who had built the first Fort Finney at the mouth of the Great Miami in 1785. This site was abandoned and a new Fort Finney was erected about a half mile above the Rapids of the Ohio in the early summer of 1787. On June 6, 1787, Finney had requested from Harmar permission to return to private life and he had gone back East. His resignation from the army became effective November 22. Finney to Harmar, June 6, 1787, and Knox to Harmar, November 22, 1787. Harmar Papers. Shortly after Finney left the name of the garrison was changed to Fort Steuben.

[20] Capt. John Mercer, of New Jersey.

[21] Valentine Thomas Dalton. He had been a captain and commander in the Wabash Regiment organized by George Rogers Clark at Vincennes following the unsuccessful expedition against the Indians in 1786, and had been active in the seizure of the goods belonging to the Spanish merchants. *Journals of the Continental Congress,* XXXII, 192n.

We marched along what is called *Clarke's Trace,*[22] and arrived on the 7th October at the Rapids of the Ohio. I was mistaken in a former letter, concerning the distance; it is about 130 miles. We saw no Indians, nor signs of Indians. We had an action with five buffalo, who would have run through the column, had they not been prevented by men facing & firing a volley at them. They killed three of them. From the Falls to the post the country is in general hilly, and good wheat land.

Major Wyllys, with the fleet, arrived at Clarksville on the 21st. On the 23rd & 24th the men were all employed in dragging the boats over the falls, a very difficult fatiguing tour of duty, the more so as the water was remarkably low. On the 28th I left the falls in the barge for the Muskingum, with orders for Captain Zeigler & Captain Strong, with their companies to follow the next day. On the 13th November, we arrived at this post. Captain Zeigler arrived here with the fleet on the 21st. We were favored with remarkably fine weather ever since we set out from the Post.

The following is my arrangement for winter quarters: At Venango, Captain Heart's[23] company; at McIntosh, part of Captain Ferguson's company; at Muskingum, Captain Zeigler's, Captain Strong's, Captain McCurdy's,[24] and Captain Bradford's[25] companies; at the Rapids of the Ohio, the late Captain Finney's and Captain Mercer's companies; at Post Vincennes, Captain Smith's and part of Captain Ferguson's companies.

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[22] The route of the famous Buffalo Trace that went from the Falls of the Ohio to Vincennes. *The Buffalo Trace,* by George R. Wilson and Gayle Thornbrough (Indiana Historical Society *Publications,* volume 15, number 2, Indianapolis, 1946).

[23] Capt. Jonathan Heart, of Connecticut.

[24] Capt. William McCurdy, of Pennsylvania.

[25] Capt. James Bradford, who entered the army from New York, though a native of Pennsylvania.

Such a large portion of the regiment being quartered at Muskingum during the winter, will save the public considerable expense with respect to provisions.

The water being so exceedingly low, detained Lieutenant Beatty[26] a long time at Fort Pitt. He did not arrive at this garrison until the 20th inst. at night. We are all happy to find that he has obtained such a just & honorable settlement for the regiment, & we are much indebted to you for having been pleased to lend him every assistance in the business.

The bearer Mr. Bartholomew Tardiveau I believe you will find to be a sensible, well informed gentleman, as well if not better acquainted with the western country (particularly the Illinois) than any one who has ever been from thence to Congress. I beg leave to refer you to him for a minute and particular description of it.[27] There have been some imposters before Congress, particularly one Parker, a whining, canting Methodist, a kind of *would be governor.*[28] He is extremely unpopular at Kaskaskias & despised by the inhabitants.

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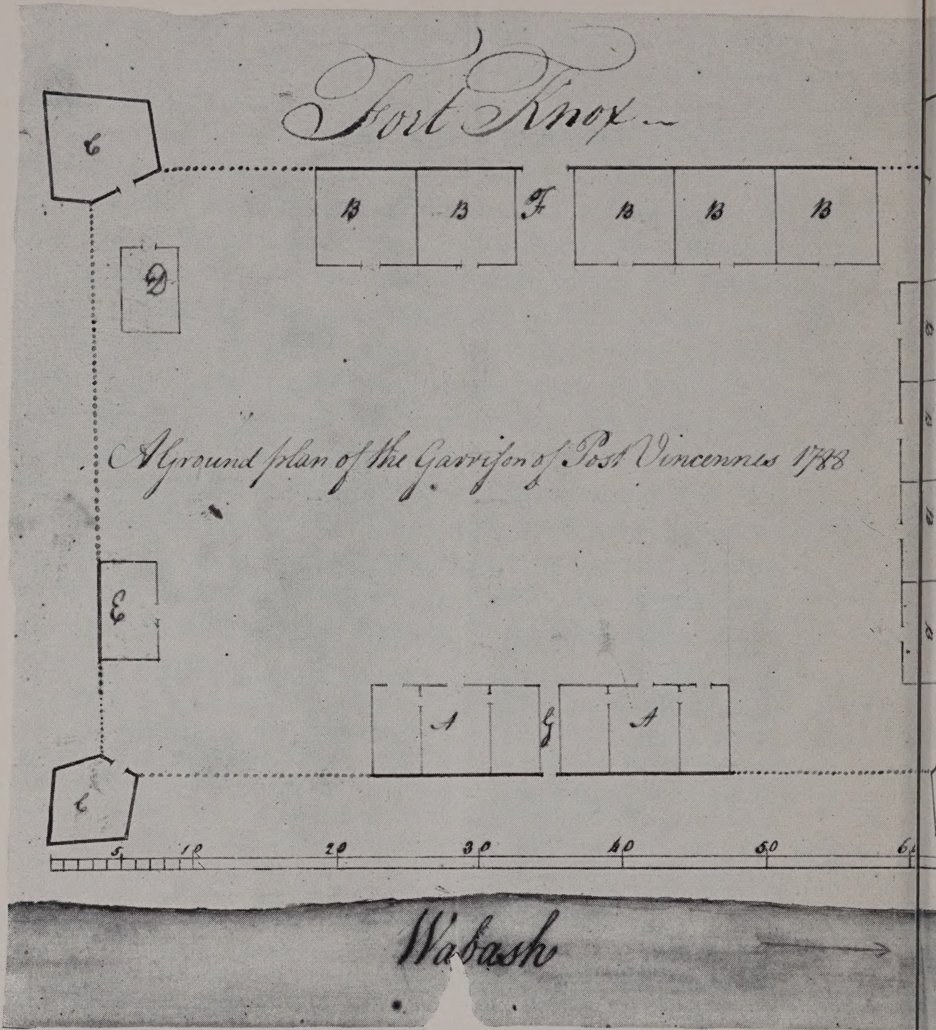
[26] Lieut. Eskuries Beatty, paymaster of Harmar's army. In April, 1785, when Congress made the first levy of seven hundred men for the frontier, it set the following monthly pay: lieutenant colonel $50.00, major $45.00, captain $35.00, lieutenant $26.00, ensign $20.00, sergeant $6.00, corporal $5.00, drummer $5.00, private, $4.00, surgeon $45.00, surgeon's mate $30.00. Payment to the army was very slow and irregular and often in depreciated currency. In October 2, 1788, a committee of the Congress reported: "The troops have generally been paid up to the first of January 1787 and the officers have had their subsistence and forage money paid up to the first of April 1788. Both officers and soldiers appear well satisfied in this Respect. . . . The Balance due the troops to the first day of July is estimated at sixty five thousand dollars." *Journals of the Continental Congress,* XXVIII, 248; XXXIV, 582.

[27] Tardiveau did not deliver this letter and its enclosures to Knox until February 20, 1788. He said that they had been "unfortunately detained by the unfaithfulness of a waggoner." Knox immediately sent copies of the enclosed documents to the Congress. *Ibid.,* XXXIV, 55.

[28] Joseph Parker. In June, 1786, he had carried a petition to Congress from some of the inhabitants of Kaskaskia who opposed John Dodge, a pro-Britisher who had assumed a tyrannical control of the village. Dodge was dislodged by a Clark emissary, John Rice Jones, and fled to the Spanish. The petition carried by Parker to Congress is printed in Alvord (ed.), *Kaskaskia Records,* pp. 381-82. Tardiveau was aligned with Dodge and probably this influenced Harmar's opinion of Parker. For a discussion of


Fort Knox
C
B
B
F
B
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A ground plan of the Garrison of Post Vincennes 1788
E
A
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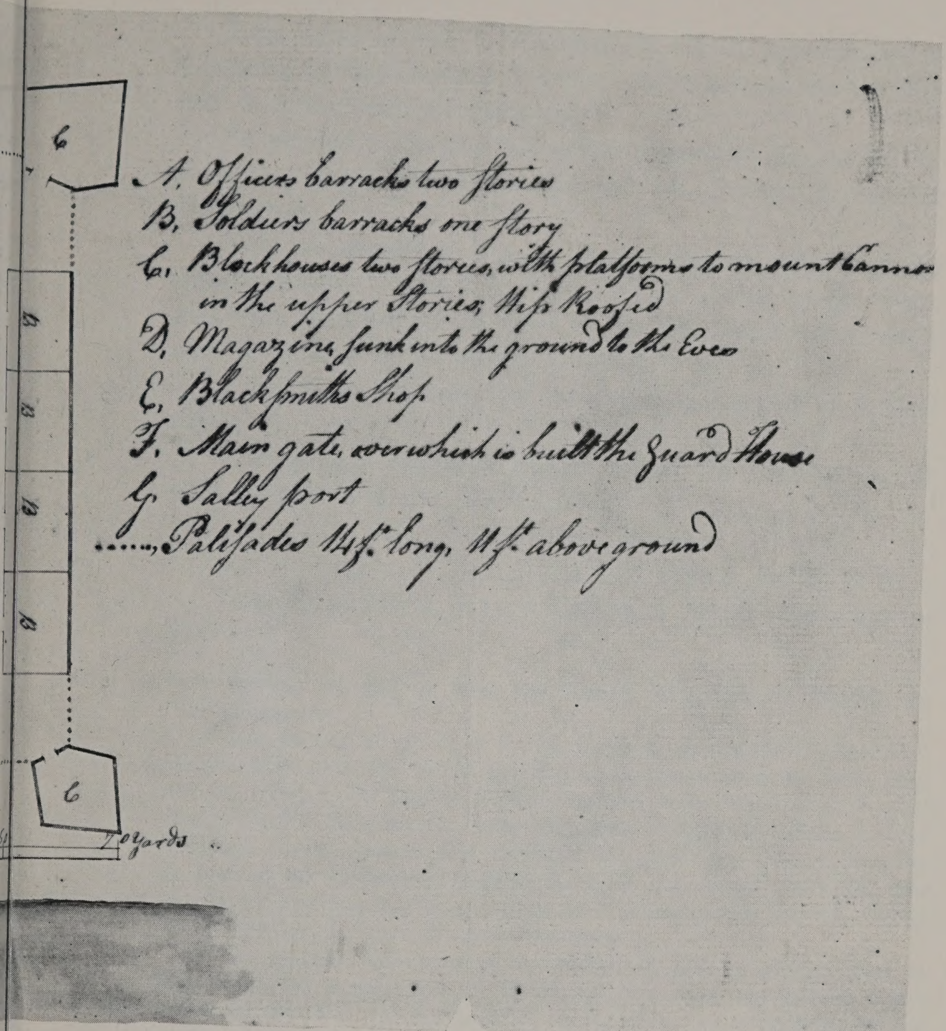
Wabash



A, Officers barracks two ſtories
B, Soldiers barracks one ſtory
C, Blockhouses two ſtories, with platforms to mount Cannon
in the upper Stories, Hip Roofed
D, Magazine, ſunk into the ground to the Eves
E, Blackſmiths Shop
F, Main gate, over which is built the Guard House
G, Salley port
……, Paliſades 14 ft. long, 11 ft. above ground

I am happy to hear of General St. Clair's appointment as Governor of the Western Territory, as it will add to the dignity & consequence of Congress.[29]

Be pleased to receive the enclosed monthly returns of the Regiment dated 1st September, the 1st October & the 1st November.

You are pleased to ask of me intelligence respecting the military lands. From Fort Massac to the mouth of the Ohio, and from thence about 20 miles up the Mississippi, the country overflows, & is by no means habitable.[30]

I shall have the honor of writing to you again in a short time.

With perfect esteem & respect I have the honor to be sir your most hble & ob't. serv't

Jos. Harmar
Lt. Col. Com'g, 1st U. S. R.

The Honorable Major General Knox, Secretary at War

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these factions see *ibid.,* p. 410n, and Alvord (ed.), *Cahokia Records,* pp. cxxxvii-cxxxviii.

[29] The election of St. Clair by the Congress was made on October 5. Winthrop Sargent was elected secretary of the Territory at the same time, and on October 16, Samuel Holden Parsons, John Armstrong, Jr., and James Mitchell Varnum were chosen as judges. Armstrong declined to serve and John Cleves Symmes was elected in his place on February 19, 1788. *Journals of the Continental Congress,* XXXIII, 610, 686; XXXIV, 50. The Northwest Territory had been established by ordinance on July 13. Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers,* II, 39-50 and notes.

[30] By resolution of Congress on October 22, 1787, a military tract to help satisfy the bounties due the Revolutionary soldiers was laid out at the mouth of the Ohio. It was bounded as follows: ". . . beginning at the mouth of the river Ohio thence up the Mississippi to the river Au Vase, thence up the same until it meets a west line from the Mouth of the little Wabash thence easterly with the said West line to the Great Wabash, thence down the same to the Ohio & thence with the Ohio to the place of beginning. . . ." Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers,* II, 76; *Journals of the Continental Congress,* XXXIII, 695-96. This tract was not used for military bounties. By an act approved June 1, 1796, Congress appropriated in lieu of it, a tract east of the Scioto River and south of the Indian boundary to be used for military bounties. *American State Papers. Public Lands* (8 volumes. Washington, D. C., 1834-61), I, 150.

[Marginal note:] Favored pr Mr Tardiveau. Duplicate forwarded pr Lieut. Schuyler who delivered it to Capt. Bradford or one of the recruiting officers at Fort Pitt about the 24th day of March 1788.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, January 1, 1788
[ALS]

POSTE VINCENNES Jany 1st 1788

DEAR GENERAL I hope you have recived my first letter which was dated the 29 of Octobre[1] and since which notingh extraordinary has happened. I can only communicate you in this present some minutes of my journal; the validity of which I can not assure as facts as all my intelligence are taken from unknown travellers. I have been informed that our taking post at this place has alarmed the British in a very great degree. Their fatigue parties employed at their fortifications at Detroit were augmented and attended with uncommun deligence *for certain.* Mr. Brantt an Indian officer has been ordered to the Miami where he has taken post with four hundred families of the Six Nations.[2] This man has ordres to prevent all communication with the Ammericans: and informed the Miamie Indians that he had been send to their town to protect them in case the Ammericans should take it in their heads to establish a Post at that place; he informed them that an advertisement had been seen where in propositions were made to furnish provisions to a body of troops at the Miamie; *meaning the proposition of the Contract in the Gazete.*

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[1] Apparently Hamtramck's letter of October 29 never reached Harmar. It does not appear among the Harmar Papers.

[2] Joseph Brant (Thay en danegea), a Mohawk chief who espoused the cause of the western Indians in their struggles with the United States, and endeavored to form a confederacy of the various western tribes. *Life of Joseph Brant . . .*, by William L. Stone (2 volumes. New York, 1838), particularly volume II, chapter 9. There is no mention in this biography of a sojourn to the Miami villages. The villages were around the confluence of the St. Joseph and St. Marys rivers, the site of present Fort Wayne. The advisability of the United States establishing a post here had been under consideration. See, for instance, a report of the Secretary at War on Indian hostilities, July 10, 1787, in *Journals of the Continental Congress,* XXXII, 329; also Tardiveau to Harmar, above, August 6, 1787. In April the Secretary at War wrote to Harmar: "Were a respectable post of four or five hundred men established at the Miami Village and connected by chains of post to Lake Erie, and from thence up the Lake to Cayahoga, and from the Miami Village down the Wabash; the Indians in the neighbourhood would soon either remove or acquiesce in the system." Letter of April 21, 1787. A year later Knox wrote again: "The Miami village and its communications both by the river which empties into lake Erie, and by the

Major Mathus the commandant at Detroit,[3] and the commissioner for the Indian Department[4] have had a treaty where a number of nations were represented the purpose of this treaty was (as I am informed by two men from that place) to charge the Indians of keeping at peace with the Ammericans, to not make war on the other side of the Ohio, but that they had an undoubted wright to deffend their property if any body should presume to take it from them. The Chawnesse and the Delware but particularly the former have recived a compensation for the loss of their lands. The presents given to those people are supposed to be about 4000 pounds Hallifax mony.[5]

Wabash, impresses itself on my mind as the next best position to the possession of the posts at Niagara and Detroit. . . ." Letter of May 23, 1788. Harmar Papers. When Harmar made his strike against the Indians in 1790, it was aimed at the Miami villages. See below, July 15, 1790.

[3] Robert Mathews, who became commandant at Detroit in 1787 and held that post for a little over a year. Milo M. Quaife (ed.), *The John Askin Papers, Volume I, 1774-1795* (Detroit, 1928), 206n.

[4] Probably Alexander McKee.

[5] Arthur St. Clair, governor of the Northwest Territory, wrote Secretary at War Knox on January 27, 1788, that the previous autumn the Indians had received from the British six thousand pounds sterling and goods of an equal value to compensate them for the losses they suffered during the Revolution. Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 41.

It was natural for the Indians to turn to the British for help and advice in their struggle against the encroaching Americans. Joseph Brant (see note 2, above) had journeyed to London in the winter of 1785-86 to find out what the British policy would be if open hostilities broke out between the Americans and the red men. He received no assurances of outright assistance, but did receive expressions of interest in and sympathy for his people. In December, 1786, a grand conference of Indians was called

Agreably to your request I profited of the first opportunity to send word to the different nations of the treaty that was to be held at Fort Pitt.[6] Every nations present accepted of the wampum that the menssenger had for his credential the Miamie nation excepted who refused it whit disdaine.

I am induced to believe that the nations of the Wabash[7] are well enuff disposed to be our friends but they are menaced by

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by Brant at Huron Village near the mouth of the Detroit River, attended by the Six Nations, the Hurons, Ottawa, Miami, Shawnee, Chippewa, Cherokee, Delaware, Potawatomi, and the Wabash tribes. They addressed a pacific letter to the American Congress, designating the Ohio as the boundary line between the Indians and Americans and expressing the hope that no treaties would be made in the future with individual tribes but all should be made openly and with a confederacy of all tribes. Stone, *op. cit.,* II, 265; *Journals of the Continental Congress,* XXXII, 36n.

The British desired peace between the Indians and Americans for the sake of the fur trade which would suffer heavily if there was war, but at the same time they realized that they would need Indian allies if their continued possession of the Northwest posts—Niagara, Detroit, Michilimackinac—was threatened. It was suggested in April, 1787, that the British might supply ammunition to the Indians to defend themselves, though they would go no further in outright support of the Indian cause. Nelson Vance Russell, *The British Regime in Michigan and the Old Northwest 1760-1796* (Carleton College, Northfield, Minn., 1939), pp. 246-47; Justin Winsor, *The Westward Movement . . .* (Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1897), 276-77; Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* I, 153-54; A. L. Burt, *The United States, Great Britain, and British North America From the Revolution to the Establishment of Peace After the War of 1812* (Yale University Press, 1940), Chapter VI. See also Introduction, above.

Major Mathews wrote to Brant on May 29, 1787, from Niagara on his way to Detroit to assume command, that Lord Dorchester (Sir Guy Carleton, governor of Canada) wanted it understood that he could not "begin a war with the Americans because some of their people encroach and made depredations upon parts of the Indian country; but they must see it is his Lordship's intention to defend the posts, and that while these are preserved, the Indians must find great security therefrom, and consequently the American's greatest difficulty in taking possession of their lands; but should they [the Americans] once become masters of the posts, they will surround the Indians, and accomplish their purpose with little trouble." Quoted in Stone, *op. cit.,* II, 271.

[6] No treaty was made at Pittsburgh. See above Hamtramck to Harmar, November 3, 1787, and note.

[7] The Wea, Kickapoo, Piankashaw, and Delaware.

the upper Indians[8] who have ordered them to cease all communication whit us: this has occasioned many conference where in I have told them that every one who would prefer the protection of the United States to that of the English would be wise and should be protected and permited to trade with us; this has in some measure reconsiled them. About four hundred are now in the vicinity of the village and throws in a considerable trade.

Mr. Delavaliniere from Kaskaskia[9] and who keeps a great correspondence with General Knox, has taken the liberty to write something about you. This information I have from Gibeau[10] and Mr. Guilbert.[11] I am sensible that he cannot injure your character in any degree. But I mention it that you may find out what it is and render him all the justice due to his conduct. If I was near him I think I would send him on an expedition down the Mississippi; for he is a great raskale.

The Spanish commanding officers of the different post on the Mississippi are encouraging settlers by giving them land gratis. A village by the name of Tewapeta[12] which is about 30 miles above the mouth of the Ohio and which was began last summer consist now of 40 or 50 families.

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[8] The Miami, Potawatomi, Shawnee, etc.

[9] Father Pierre Huet de la Valinière. He served five Canadian parishes between 1759 and 1779, then went back to France. He returned briefly to Canada in 1785, came to the United States, and in 1786 became vicar general of Illinois on appointment by Bishop John Carroll. He seems to have been a general troublemaker wherever he was stationed, quarrelsome and self-willed. He plunged into the political life of Kaskaskia with relish. He participated in the overthrow of John Dodge (see above, p. 56n) and then became the opponent of Barthélemi Tardiveau who was favored by Harmar and the French inhabitants. He left the village late in 1787 or early in 1788. Alvord (ed.), *Kaskaskia Records,* xxxvii-xlix. See also references to him in Rice, *Barthélemi Tardiveau,* pp. 10, 11, 21-24.

[10] Father Pierre Gibault, who had had parishes on the Mississippi and Wabash since 1768. He performed good services for Clark during the latter's conquest of the Northwest, using his influence with the French of Vincennes to get them to surrender peacefully. At this time (1788) Father Gibault, who still styled himself vicar general of the bishop of Quebec, was at Vincennes. He left there in 1789 for Cahokia, then in 1792 crossed the Mississippi into Spanish territory to become priest of New Madrid. Alvord (ed.), *Kaskaskia Records,* xliii, xlv, xlix, l; and below, letters of October 29 and November 2, 1789.

[11] Not identified.

The Natches have been lately reinforced of two companies; that garrison consist now of about 420 men.[13]

The situation of my store is about three months of flour and ten B. of beef. But the debts that are to be paid with flour will reduce it much. A very great proportion should be send me as I have nothing to supply my wants for any thing I may have occasion to procure from the poeple for the use of the garrison, and for the support of the officers who having no other means to get the necessaries of life: for you well know that admiting the officers had mony that it has no value; and they have this day requested me to mention their grievences hoping that their remote station will be a sufficient apology for troubling you, pr[a]ying that their particular situation may be represented to the minister at war; provoided you should think that it would answer.[14]

Capt. Furgeson company is bad for the want of cloaths. If you could find some it would be of very great service, and Capt. Zeagler should send cloaths for the men he has here:[15] the artificer of his company has been sick ever since.

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[12] Tewapité.

[13] In 1787 Natchez was elevated from the status of a post to that of a government, and the office of governor was filled by the able Manuel Gayoso de Lemos, later governor of Louisiana. Arthur Preston Whitaker, *The Spanish American Frontier: 1783-1795 . . .* (Boston and New York, 1927), p. 82.

[14] See below, Harmar to Hamtramck, August 7, 1788.

[15] The Congress provided in 1781 "that all noncommissioned officers and soldiers . . . be annually furnished with one regimental coat, full made; one cloth vest; one pair of cloth breeches; one pair of woolen overalls; two pairs of woolen hose; two pair of woolen socks; one felt hat or leather cap; four shirts; two pair of linen overalls; four pair of strong shoes; one blanket; one rifle shirt, and one pair of woolen gloves; also, one pair of shoe buckles and one stock clasp ever two years." Apparently this arrangement still prevailed. In October, 1788, a committee of Congress reported: "The troops enlisted in 1785 have already received two complete suits, and most of them have one year's clothing, complete, due them.

Before I close my letter I beg to make an observation respecting the situation of this garrison. The United States have not a Posts but can be supply with provision in spite of a war with the Indians (mine exepted).[16] Few Indians ill disposed might at any time cut off all communication for which reason I propose that this garrison should have at all times three months provision on hand and that well salted and the common supply might be fresh beef from the falls of the Ohio, which at any time may be drove in to this country. Great care should be taken in the salting of the beef for the other day I received ten B. from Mr. Finley who were almost spoiled. If it had been warm waither we should have been without beef all perhaps for the sake of half bushel of salt.

The Doctor[17] informs me that vinegar will be a very necessary thing in the spring.

Will you be pleased to present my respect to Mrs. Harmar.

I am sir with very great respect and estime your

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

[Addressed:] The Honorable Briged. Genr. Harmar Muskingum

[Endorsed:] Major Hamtramck from Post Vincennes. January 1st 1788 Answered July 26th 1788

"Provision was made for the 3d year's clothing, but the Secretary at War has been constrained to apply it for the recruits; otherwise they could not have been enlisted, good clothing being the greatest inducement for a recruit to enlist into the service.

"The board of treasury have advertised for a contract for clothing, and hope to succeed, in which case the old soldiers who have reenlisted will receive their suit in October next. Those of this description who will be discharged will probably prefer a compensation in money to the clothing.

"The troops on the frontiers enlisted in 1786 have also received two suits of clothing, and will, if the board of treasury succeed in their contract, duly receive their third suit." Raphael P. Thian, *Legislative History of the General Staff of the Army of the United States . . . 1775-1901* (Washington, D.C., 1901), pp. 320, 327.

[16] Forts being supplied by the contractors other than Vincennes were McIntosh, Harmar, Steuben at the Rapids of the Ohio, and Venango (Fort Franklin).

[17] John Elliot, surgeon's mate at Post Vincennes.

HARMAR TO HAMTRAMCK, March 1, 1788

[Letterbook Copy]

FORT HARMAR March 1st 1788

DEAR MAJOR, I have not had the pleasure of receiving a single line from you since I left Post Vincennes. The inclemency of the winter perhaps may account for it. Lieut. Beatty writes me from Philadelphia on the 3rd ult. wherein his prospects of receiving money were very flattering. He may be expected on with seventeen thousand dollars in solid coin.

Congress have been pleased by their act of the 3rd October to call upon the same states to raise the same number of men for 3 years longer;[1] it is done with a view to retain the present officers in service. The Secretary at War wishes to know how many of the old men will re-engage. Our success at this post has exceeded my most sanguine expectations. About 100 have already been enlisted & attested before me, from the old companies. I wish you to inform me how many you can get from Captain Smith's company; Ferguson's, as they have so long to serve is for the present out of the question. By this conveyance the second year's clothing for his company is forwarded. Be pleased to present my compliments to him, and inform him that Major Doughty[2] encloses him the invoice & writes to him upon the subject.

The Grand Treaty with the Indians is to be held in May next at the Falls of the Muskingum by General St. Clair (who is the Governor of the Western Territory)[3] in company with the Superintendant of Indian Affairs.[4]

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[1] *Journals of the Continental Congress,* XXXIII, 602-3; above p. 32n.

[2] Major John Doughty, of New Jersey.

[3] The instructions given St. Clair by Congress were "to examine into the real temper of the Indian tribes inhabiting the Northern Indian Department." If a treaty seemed necessary he should then "hold as general a one" as he could with all the tribes. The primary objects of the treaty were to be "the removing of all causes of controversy, so that peace and harmony . . . [might] continue between the United States and the Indian tribes, the regulating trade, and settling boundaries." Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 37. A treaty was not concluded until January 9, 1789. See below, Harmar to Hamtramck, February 15, 1789, and note.

[4] Richard Butler. See above, p. 22n.

I have enclosed to Major Wyllys a duplicate of the Secretary at War's letter to me of the 14th November with the several enclosures, & have directed him to communicate to you the contents thereof. It particularly relates the mutinous conduct of a certain Captain Sullivan formerly in Moylan's Dragoons. He has written an inflammatory letter to the Spanish minister, in consequence of which an act of Congress has been passed, and I have orders, if he should be found in the federal territory to seize and confine him.[5]

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[5] Capt. John Sullivan. On August 8, 1787, Diego de Gardoqui, Spanish minister to the United States, sent to John Jay, secretary of foreign affairs, a copy of a Charleston, South Carolina, paper in which was published a letter from Sullivan which Jay described as an offence against the peace and dignity of the United States. The Sullivan letter, dated March 1, 1787, concerned the tender point of Spanish-American affairs, the closing of the Mississippi River to American trade. Sullivan wrote in part, "From Natchez to Kaskaskia, from Pittsburgh to St. Mary's river, they [Americans of the West] are prepared to pour forth with the greatest ease, 50,000 veterans in arms, in defence of their *commercial* rights, throughout the navigable rivers of the southern parts of this Empire. . . . The permission of Congress will not be solicited on this occasion. In Congress this people are not represented. I am now on my way to the western waters, where people too long confined to unnatural boundaries, are ready to float with the current of the Mississippi into the sea. . . ." The matter was referred to the Secretary at War who reported to the Congress that Sullivan had been a ringleader in a mutiny which took place in Philadelphia in June, 1783, while he and other soldiers were furloughed and waiting their discharge from the army. Knox doubted that at this date Sullivan could be convicted for this. However, the Secretary regarded the letter in the Charleston paper as evidence that Sullivan would "to the utmost of his power endeavor to interrupt and injure the harmony subsisting between the United States and the Crown of Spain." Whereupon Congress directed Harmar to seize him if he should come within the Federal territory so that he could be legally tried and punished according to his crimes. *Journals of the Continental Congress,* XXXIII, 630-31, 666-67; Knox to Harmar, November 14, 1787, Harmar Papers; Gardoqui's letter to Jay, the Sullivan letter, and Jay's report to Congress are printed in *The Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States . . . 10th September, 1783, to . . . March 4 1789, Volume VI* (Washington, D. C., 1833), 234-40, 240-42.

On July 16, 1788, Harmar wrote to Major John Wyllys, commanding at the post at the Rapids of the Ohio, "I never conceived Sullivan's letter

You will be pleased to muster your command up to the first of the present year, & transmit me the rolls as early as possible.

Congress have passed a resolve (a copy of which I have enclosed to Major Wyllys) laying off a million of acres at the mouth of the Ohio to satisfy the claims of the late army;[6] my opinion has been asked by the Secretary at War as to the quality of the said lands. Mr. Tardiveau has informed, that from Fort Massac[7] to the Mouth of the Ohio & from thence for 20 miles up the Mississippi, the country over flows & is by no means habitable, which intelligence I have officially transmitted. The tract is to begin at the Mouth of the Ohio, from thence up the Mississippi to the River au Vase, from thence due east to the Little Wabash, & from thence down it to the place of beginning. It is more than probable that you will be able to collect more full information respecting this tract of country. I wish you to pay particular attention to this matter, & write me by this conveyance upon the subject.

I now detach Ensign Spear to bring up the commissioner's goods from the Falls, and have given him permission to visit your post.[8] I am very anxious to hear from you, & shall expect upon Mr. Spear's return a full & ample detail of all your

to be of such an alarming nature as the Secretary at War imagined it. Lieutenant Armstrong's report fully convinces me that the matter was highly blown, and that no mutinous designs are in agitation, either in the country called the State of Franklin, the Cumberland settlements, or the district of Kentucky. If Sullivan should set his foot in the Western Territory, endeavor to have him apprehended, but no where else." Quoted in "Military Journal of Major Ebenezer Denny," in *Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania,* VII, Appendix I, 435. This letter is also in the Harmar Letterbooks.

[6] See above, p. 57n.

[7] On the north bank of the Ohio, about eight miles below the mouth of the Tennessee River.

[8] See below, June 2, 1788, for Ensign Edward Spear's report of this expedition. On April 26, 1788, Harmar wrote to the Secretary at War that Spear had been dispatched to the Rapids of the Ohio (Fort Steuben) to bring up the goods belonging to the commissioners to be used in treating with the Indians at Muskingum. Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 44.

transactions, and to be made particularly acquainted with the temper of the Wabash Indians, & all other occurrences both in your quarter & in the Illinois country.

Mr. Melchior,[9] a young gentleman serving as a volunteer in the regiment, accompanies Mr. Spear. I beg leave to recommend him to your notice.

Be pleased to present my compliments to Mr. Vigo,[10] Monsieur Gibbeau, Col. Legras, Major Bosseron, the Messrs. Gamelins and other principal inhabitants of the village. You will also be pleased to remember me affectionately to all the officers of your garrison, & to Captain Vanderburg.[11]

I am dear Major with great regard your h'ble serv't

Jos. Harmar
Lt. Col. Com'g 1st U. S. R.

Major Hamtramck Commanding Officer at Post Vincennes

Mrs. Harmar presents her compliments to M. H. and will thank him to send her some of the pachan nuts.

[Marginal note:] Favored pr Ensign Spear, who set out from hence on the 7th instant.

Hamtramck to Harmar, April 13, 1788
[ALS]

Poste Vincennes April 13th 1788

Dear General I had the honor of yours by Mr. Spear in which you informed me that you have not recived any letter from me since your departure from this place. I have writen three times before this; my first was dated the 29th of Octob. 87. I shall then in this give you a repetition of the three letters in question. Few days after you left me a man arrived from Detroit and informed me that our taking post at this place had alarmed the British in a very great degree; their fatigue parties employed at their fortification had been augmented and attended with an uncommon deligance. Mr. Brant an Indian officer had been last autum ordered to take post at the Miami which he did with four hundred families of the Six Nations. This man had ordres to prevent all communication with the Ammericans. He allso informed the Miami Indians that he was send to protect them in case the Americans should take it in their heads to establish a post at that place which was probable as the commandant of Detroit had seen an advertisment where in, propositions were made to furnish the American troop with provision at different post and amongst the rest the Miami was one. However, Mr. Brant and his large family remained but few days at the place. The Miami Indians did not like to see so many visiters eating the produce of their forest and Mr. Brant and party were compaled to return to Detroit. Since which he is gone to Canada.

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[9] Jacob Melcher, of Pennsylvania, who joined the First Regiment as cadet, December 12, 1787, and was commissioned ensign September 29, 1789. Powell (comp.), *List of Officers of the Army of the United States,* p. 37.

[10] Francis Vigo, Vincennes trader and friend of the Americans.

[11] Henry Vanderburgh.

Last fall Major Mathus who then commanded at Detroit in company with the British commissioner for the Indian Department had a treaty with a number of nations. They charged the Indians to keep peace with us, and to not make war on the other side of the Ohio, but that they had an undoubted wright to deffend their property and their lands should any body presume to take it from them.

The Chawnesse and the Delware but particularly the former have recived a compensation for the loss of their land. The presents given them are supposed to be about 4000 pounds Hallifax money—

The garison of the Natchies has been reinforced of two companies that garison consist now of about 420 men.

On the 16th February a Moake [Mohawk?] Indian whom was a courier from Brant to the Southern Indians pased here. He informed me that his business had been to the southard for the purpose of ratifing the peace by the authority of Brant, and that it was particularly mentioned to them to leave in a good understanding with the Americans. This Indian left me on the 20 and on the 21st thirteen Sherokees arrived from Cumberland River. Their message is as they informed me, to see how affairs went on the Wabash, and whether they could get some traders to go to their nation. I took every possible measures to have them to divulge the particulars of the Moak Indian and what his business had been to the suthard in which I no not if I succeded. However they informed me that he had come there with a large quantity of wampum to present to the nations, and invited them to take up the tomyhock in the spring and to strike on the American setlements. To which the Indians refused saying that about ten days before they had made a treaty with the Americans and it was to be a perpetual one, that he had come too late, and advised him to return immediately for fear the Americans should hear of his embasy.[1] These neuses have coaborated in a very great measure with a number of intelligence I some time ago received from Mr. Henery[2] of this place who is very much conected with the Indians, particularly his wife. He told me that some Indians had given him to understand that we should have a war. Should that be the case I am now in a state of deffence. My piquets are up and the block houses are to their second story. If I have but provision in time I am no way conserned, althoug one difficulty will existe the men time [men's time] of Smith company being out so early and none of them have as yet inlisted, owing to the great fatigue they have had and have every day, indifferently victualed, and no pay. The money that Capt. Ashton[3] has for us has been foure months at the Falls to the great disatisfaction of the officers, but particularly the soldiers.

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[1] No official treaty was made with the Cherokee in 1788. In 1785 a treaty of "peace and perpetual friendship" had been concluded with them. The next treaty with them was not made until 1791. Kappler (ed.), *Laws and Treaties,* II, 8-11, 29-32.

[2] Moses Henry.

[3] Capt. Joseph Asheton, who took command of Capt. Walter Finney's company following the latter's resignation from the army.

Let us return a moment to Indian affairs. As for a war I know not what to believe. I hear so many neuese, so many reports that I can not forme an idea of anything. All I am induced to believe is that if the Indians should strike it will not be a general affaire. I believe that some boats will this spring or summer be attacked, perhaps few scalps made. I would advise the contractors' boats to take every precaution and I think that an escort from the troops at the Falls might be granted them and be of service. Finley had promised to furnish me with provision for six months but I doubt much he will do it without your assistance. I am under very great obligation to Mr. Vigo for his assistance in furnishing me supplys all last winter. I hope he will not meat with any difficulties in getting his money. I will be oblig'd to you if you will be so good as to informe me wether he will recive his pay from the public or from the contractor.[4]

Some time ago when I recived the information from Mr. Henery I had occasion to send a boat to the Ohio for a small supply of provision. At that time my piquets were not up and had but 30 men fit for duty. I was reduced to the necessity of puting the United States to the expence of hiering ten Canadians to whom I gived a doll a day, for if I had paid them in provision I would have had none for my self, the cargo being so small. I hope you will approuv of my conduct for I could not spare a man, being obliged to procure our piquets at a great and difficult distance from the fort. Mr. Vigo was good enuff to pay the men.

I have made every effort to have the prisoners we lost last summer but as yet without success. I must beg your opinion on this point. I have had it in contemplation to take one or two Indians prisoners of the same nation and village that took our men, and to keep them in confindment until they returned the soldiers. I know the nation. It is Indians who lieves on *la Riviere a l'Enguile* and I believe that I could take one who was in the action with respect to the Ilinois country.[5] I have not heard from there long ago. Last winter a party of the Kikapoo who lieves on St. Joseph River made an excursion in the Ilinois, killed four and tooke prisoner 12 men.

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[4] For Vigo's account against the United States, see pp. 92, 137, 148-49, below.

We have had a total change in our goverment, for it was the most injuste court that could have been invented. If any body called for a court the president had

20 livers in peltry			20
14 magistrates at	10 livers	do	140
for a room	10	do	10
other small expences	10	do	10
which made in peltry			180

and which is 360 in mony, so that man who had twenty or thirty dollars due was oblig'd to pay, if he wanted a court, 180 livers in peltry. This court also never granted an execution but only took care to have the fees of the court paid.

The goverment of this country has been in the Legras and Gamelin family for a long time to the great dissatisfaction of the poeple who presented me a petition some days ago where in they complained of the injustice of their court, in consequence of which I have disolved the old court, ordered new magistrates to be elected and established new regulations for them to go by. Copy of which I have the honor to enclose.[6] My code of laws will no doubt make you laugh but I hope you will consider that I am nither a lawyer or a legislator. I have done it for the best. One good thing is that their is not one among them that can find fault with it.

This place is so extravagant that the officers have requested me to represent you their situation and beg that if you should think propre to represent their situation to the minister at war. I believe that if they were permited to draw provision beside their subsistance they would be satisfyd.[7] With respect to the land, I have informed myself of a man who has traveled all that country. Mr. Spear was present and will be able to give you all the information, but the Ilinois River would be the country or the Wabash.

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[5] For Harmar's reply to this, see his letter to Hamtramck, July 26, 1788, below.

[6] See below.

[7] See below, Harmar to Hamtramck, August 7, 1788.

Bradshaw[8] boat which I had with me and the only one is delivered to Mr. Spear. I am now even without a canoe. I should be very much oblig'd to you if you could send me such crafts as you may think propre. I have the honor to inclose a return of the store on hand but a good [part] will go to pay the debts.[9] I also inclose return from the troops and send the muster rolls by Mr Spear. The doctor return is also inclosed[10] and every day he tels me the great necessity of having vinigar for the troops, as we shall leave altogether on salt provision.

With respect to Mr. Sulivan[11] if he should come in to this country or the Ilinois I should take measures to have him secured.

I must inform you of an excellent mode the people of this country have to preserve meat in the hotes days in the summer; after your beef is kill'd you cut it in to pieces and after being well salted you envelop it in to its skin after which you put it in to a hole made in the ground for the purpose and then you cover it in such maner as to admit of no air. If you let it remain in that condition for three or four days I am inform'd it will keep good for two months but this operation must be performed the moment the animal is kill'd.

I must observe one difficulty that this garison lays under, the want of ground rond us. On the side of the village our neighbour is too near and on the other side and in front I think that we should have at least 200 yeards. If I could be permited to grant any public land as an equivilent for that laying round the garison I believe I could negotiate the business with the proprietors of the land. I have not been able to procure a flag at this place. I should be under very great obligation if you would be pleased to procure me one and have it send. It is a piece of forniture that the Indians much estime and they have asked me a number times wy I had not one.[12]

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[8] Contractor's agent at the Rapids of the Ohio.

[9] See below.

[10] See below.

[11] See Harmar to Hamtramck, March 1, 1788, above, with note on Sullivan.

Capt. Furgeson wants to go down the country this fall. I have no objection if an artillery officer can be send. Doctor Prior[13] has desired me to request of you for him that if a place in the surgical department should offer that he migh[t] feel it. Please to present my compliments to Mrs. Harmar.

I am sir with very great respect and estime,

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

In my bead with the feaver for the 4th times.

[Addressed:] The Honble Brigd'r General Harmar Fort Harmar

[Endorsed:] Major Hamtramck from Post Vincennes April 13, 1788 Answered July 26th 1788.

[Enclosure 1-D]

Price current Vincennes Apr the 4th 88

	Dolls	
Corn pr bushell	2	0
Flour pr Hundred	7	00
porke pr lb		30
Beef pr lb		15
Burdea wine pr bottle	2	0
Spirits pr Gallon	12	0
Whiskey pr Gal	8	0
Butter pr lb	1	0
Eggs pr Dowzen	1	0
Loaf sugar pr lb	1	0
Brown do pr lb		60
Coffee pr lb	1	45
A[illeg.]foul	1	0

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[12] For Harmar's reply on both of these matters see p. 98 below.

[13] Abner Prior, of New York.

Potatoes pr Bushell	2	0
Onions do	5	0
Cabbage pr head		15
Turnips pr bushell	1	0

[Enclosure 2-ACS]

REGULATIONS FOR THE COURT OF POST VINCEENES

In consequence of a petition presented to me by the people of Post Vinceenes wherin they complain of the great expence to which each individual is exposed in the recovery of his property by the present court, and as they express a wish to have another mode established for the administration of justice, I do therefore by these presents dissolve the said court; and direct that five magistrates be vested by the suffrages of the people who when chosen will meet and settle their seniority.

One magistrate will have power to try causes not exceding fifty livers in peltry. Two magistrates will determine all causes not exceding one hundred livers in peltry. From their decision any persons agrieved may (on paying the cost of a suit) appeal to the district court, which will consist of three magistrates. The senior one will preside. They will meet the third Tousday in every month and sett two days unless the business before them be compleated within that time. All causes in this court shall be determined by a jury of twelve inhabitans, any person sumonond by the sheriff as a jury man who refuses or neglects to attend shall be find the price of a days labour. In case of indisposition he will previous to the setting of the court inform the clerk Mr. Antoine Gamelin who will order such vacancies to be filled.

The fees of the court shall be as follows—

A magistrates for every causes of fifty livers or upward in peltry, shall recive one pistole in peltry, and in proportion for a lesser sum. The sheriff for serving a writ or a warrant shall recive three livers in peltry. For [?]ing an execution 5 pr ct. including the fees of the clerk of the court.

The clerk for issuing a writ shall recive three livers in peltry, and all other fees as heretofore.

The Jury being an office which will be reciprocal are not to recive pay. All expences of the court to be paid by the person that is cast. This last part may appear to you to be an extraordinary charge, but my reason for mentioning it, is that formerly the court made the one who was the most able pay the fees of the court whether he lost or no.

The magistrates before the[y] inter into the execution of their office will take the following oath before the commandant— I. A. do swear that I will administer justice impartially and to the best of my knowledge and understanding. So help me god.

Given under my hand this 5th day of April 1788.

J. F. Hamtramck Maj. Comd't

[Enclosure 3-ADS]

Return of Stores Wanting for the use of the Sick at Post Vincennes Ap. 13[14]

200	pounds Brown Sugar
12	pounds Bohea Tea
20	pounds Chocolate
1	Kegg Rice
1	Quarter Cask Port Wine
1	Barrell Vinegar

John Elliot Surg'n M.

N. B. The Troops at this poste living intirely on salt provisions, renders the issuing of vinegar as part of their ration essentially necessary and will be a means of preserving their health in a very considerable degree.

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[14] On January 3, 1788, John McDowell, the first surgeon of the United States army, wrote to Harmar that he was enclosing an estimate for medical supplies for the ensuing year. "I have made it purposely for a larger quantity of some articles, than heretofore," he wrote, "because I am informed that all the medicines sent to Post Vincennes, were lost in the Wabash River, and the supply that came on last summer, was so very imperfect, that there will be scarce any on hand at the time these may arrive. . . ." Harmar Papers.

J. Elliot S M

[Endorsed:] Return of hospital stores wanting at Post Vincennes Aprl 14th 1788

[Enclosure 4-ADS]

A return of stores on hand 15th April 88

	lb of pork	lb of beef	bls flour	lb of soap	lb of candles	bush'ls of salt	barrels whiskey
	10400	4300	—	—	—	2	—

Post Vincennes
15 April 88

H. Van Der Burgh[15]

Hamtramck to Harmar, May 21, 1788

[ALS]

Post Vincennes May 21st 1788

Dear general I hope you have recived my letter by Mr. Spear[1] in which I had the honor of communicating you all the neuse of this country, and I also conclude that you have by this time recived four of my letters; if you have not, I hope you will not charge me with neglect, for I can assure you that I have wrote by every oportunity.

Since the departure of Mr. Spear I have recived a number of intelligence from the Weyah villages[2] and my information which I not doubt in the least, is that scalps are dayly

[15] Henry Vanderburgh, who had a store in Vincennes, was also acting as commissary for the post at this time.

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[1] Letter of April 13, above.

[2] On the Tippecanoe below the present city of Lafayette.

brough[t] in supposed to come from Kentuckey. I am about taking a measure which I hope you will approve. I am sending to them that if after a month after my notification to cease commiting depredation, I hear they bring in more scalps, or prisoners, I shall prohibit all Weyatenas to enter the vilage. In my opinion we will have goodill of trouble with those vilains, until they are distroy'd. Their vilages may easily be surprised and if you t[h]ought propre to procure me 4 or 500 men I would do my best to accomplish the business. About 80 of the Weyas are out at war on the Ohio.

I am very much at lost how to act respecting goods coming from Detroit; the merchants of this place are dayly making application to bring in some; I will be very much oblige to you to give me dire[c]tion. If it is not permited I could wish that some merchants of our country might be incouraged to come here, for if the Indians can not get their necessary supplys at this place they will go to the British merchants at the Meamie. Linen is a capital article, a man with a good assortment of it would get all the peltry of the Illinois and of this place. The white poeple are without shirts.

I have a ranger with me whose time will expire very soon. He has not as yet recived any cloathing and if I can be permited to reinlist him he may be serviceable.

In my letter by Mr. Spear I had the honor to inform you how much obligation I had to Mr. Vigo for supplying the garison. Finding myself particularly interested being accontable for the payment (for all the provision has been purchased on my credit) I hope and I am assured you will give me a *coup de main* to extricate myself from a hevy debt. The rations I have bought will come to about 13 d/o Pens. money.

Not a man has yet reinlisted and imagine very few will; the soldiers dont like the place. It is too dear for them. I shall be very week in August, the time of Smith's company expiring every day. I have the honor of inclosing you a return respecting their inlistment, also a return of provision in store, and the deposition of two men that have made their escape from the Indians.[3] One Mr. Furgeson who had also been taken prisoner is safe at Detroit. I have seen a letter from that place to a merchant in the vilage which says that one Col. Conelly[4] is arrived at Detroit with ordres to rise a regt. How it is to be raised and for what time it dos not mention. Lord Dorchester[5] has given ordres to have the lake side of the twon picketed.

We have had a general inondation. About 1000 bushels of grain that had been sown in the lower preries has been under water and the Illinois has been in the same situation.

I have made out to ascertain the number of wariors on the Wabash and those of the Miami, a return of which I send you.[6]

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[3] See below for the last two enclosures mentioned.

[4] John Connolly, a Britisher, who later in the year was reported in Louisville holding out inducements to the people of Kentucky to come under the protection of the King. Governor St. Clair wrote from Fort Harmar in December, 1788, to John Jay: "I have received information from Detroit which I depend upon, that a certain Colonel Conolly, who came to that place from Quebec last winter, has not long ago set out for Louisville, at the Rapids of the Ohio. He is the Conolly that made himself pretty remarkable during the Revolution, and was appointed a lieutenant-colonel in one of the refugee corps. He is upon the half-pay list, and has lately obtained from Lord Dorchester an addition of two hundred pounds sterling per annum, and his expenses." Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 101.

Major Wyllys, commanding at Fort Steuben across the Ohio from Louisville, wrote to Harmar, "I have . . . ben able to trace him [Connolly] through the upper counties to Limestone [present Maysville], from whence he sat out for Detroit. It is certain that he has made proposals of a nature highly injurious to the interests of the United States, to many of the leading characters in Kentucke—one which is their declaring themselves independent of the Union and putting themselves under the protection of Great Britain—how far he may be authorized by that [the British] government in the business, is what I cannot certainly learn. He held up the idea that he was impowered by it to make offers, and open a negotiation of that kind. . . . I do not believe that this plan is, at present, agreeable to the majority of the people [of Kentucky]." Letter of April 15, 1789, Harmar Papers.

[5] Sir Guy Carleton, governor of Canada, 1786 to 1796. He had earlier served as lieutenant governor and governor of Quebec, and in the Revolution with the rank of general.

[6] See below.

Our new goverment has taken place. Five magistrates have been elected by the suffrage of the poeple but not one of the ottoman familys remains in. One Mr. Miliet, Mr. Henery, Mr. Bagargon, Capt. Johnson & Capt. Dolton have been elected.[7] You will be surprised to see Dolton in office. But I found that he had too many friends to refuse him. I keep a watchfull eye over him, and find that he conduct himself with great propriety.

I have left a number of affairs unsetled in New York when I lef it. I expect that the first letters I get from thence will determine whether it will be necessary that I should go up. If it is could I obtain your permission? I suppose you have heard that we have lost Col Legrass last winter.

Will you be so good as to present my respects to Mrs. Harmar. I hope her rackons & the beaver tails have arrived safe. I am sir with every sentiments of estime and respect your most obedt servt,

J. F. Hamtramck

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brigadier General Harmar Fort Harmar Muskingum River. To be left at James Ohara Pittsburgh

[Endorsed:] Major Hamtramck from post Vincennes May 21st 1788 Received August 1 1788. Answered August 7th 1788.

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[7] Jean Baptiste Miliet, Moses Henry, Nicholas Baillardjon (?), James Johnson, and Valentine Thomas Dalton. See note on Dalton above, p. 54n.

[Enclosure 1-ADS]

Return of the number of fiting men in different villages on the Wabash and at the Mawmee and distance from the post

	Distance miles	Men	
High lands[8]	120	30	
Vermillion	60	200	
Wyahtinaws[9]	60	300	
Kickapoos opposite the Wyah		100	
The Isle River[10]	60	150	
Mawmee	120	350	
Grand Elks hart	60	100	those leaves [lives] on the two rivers that forks at the Mawmee
Little Elks hart	15	60	
		1290	

I believe the computation not to be an extravagant one.

J. F. Hamtramck Major

Post Vincennes May 16th 88

[Enclosure 2-DS]

James Gray & William Griffin Garland relate that on the morning of the 21st of last month[11] coming down the Ohio river [in a] Kentucky boat in company with three other men they were taken between the Little and Great Miami by a party of one hundred Indians. Forty of them were in a flatt and the others on shore. They were principally Shawanees, with a few Mingo's and Cherokees. Capt. James and Captain Snake, two Shawanees, appeared to be the principal men amongst them. That in the afternoon of the same day they took another boat with five men and a very considerable quantity of merchandize. The prisoners were divided amoungst the Indians to be taken to the different towns. That they two were carried up the Great Miami within two or three days' march of the Shawanees Towns where they made their escape on the 22 of April. They also say that a few days before they made their escape the Indians brought in a large quantity of plunder which they told the prison[er]s they got out of a boat they had taken near the mouth of the Great Miami in which was six men, five of whom they killed, the other made his escape.

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[8] Site of Terre Haute. [9] Ouiatanon. [10] Eel River.

[11] This must have been on the morning of March 21.

Post Vincennes
May 18th 88

N. B. The[y] informed the prisoners that some of them might go to the treaty on the [Muskingum?] but that they prefered war to peace as they got much more by it.

I hope you will see those two capts. at the treaty.

J. F. Hamtramck

[Enclosure 3-ADS]

Return of provision &c. Post Vincennes

	Bls Flour	Pounds Pork	Pounds Beef	Bls Whiskey	Boxes Soap	Boxes Candles	Pounds Bacon	Bls Salt	Bls Vinegar
	74	14350	2861	6	1	1	2000	2	1

May 19th 1788 H. Van Der Burgh

Lieut. Edward Spear to Harmar, June 2, 1788

[ALS]

Sir, Agreeably to your orders of the 7th March I left Fort Harmar with my party for Post Vincennes.[1]

I arrived at the Rapids of the Ohio on the 16th. In consequence of the waters being very high, and the difficulty which must attend crossing the streams in my way to the Post, Major Wyllys thought it most adviseable to send me by water; I accordingly set out for that place on the 30th, and arrived on the 9th April.

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[1] See Harmar to Hamtramck, March 1, 1788, above.

On my arrival I delivered my dispatches to Major Hamtramck, and waited for his until the afternoon of the 15th, at which time I left the Post, in company with a keel boat with seven inhabitants on board. I had on board of my boat Mr. Melchor,[2] one serg't, one corp'l, & 16 privates. Previous to my leaving the Post I was informed by a inhabitant that a party of Indians had left that place with a determination to attack us.

I got into the Ohio on the 16th. On the morning of the 21st at 8 o'clock about 150 miles below the Rapids one of the soldiers discovered two canoes on the Virginia shore. The moment I saw them, I found that they had but just landed, their sides & oars being still wet. At that instant an Indian made his appearance from behind a tree, that stood on a point formed by a small stream which emptied into the river; as soon as he appeared he fired, which was immediately followed by a number of shot from the point. I supposed them to be at a distance of between twelve and fifteen paces from the boats. My party having their arms convenient put it in my power to return the fire very quick.

The party behaved with great bravery and coolness. As soon as I fired I ordered the boat into the current. Shortly after I put out, the Indians gave me a second fire, but from the boats being turned the orning [awning] formed a tollerable cover for the party. They fired a number of balls through the orning and colours. I had two men wounded belonging to Captain Bradford's[3] company (Collins and McCord) the former was wound in the head. He dyed in three hours, the latter in the back and dyed the fifth day.

When I got about the centre of the river I discovered an Indian on the opposite shore. About this time the two canoes were taken out of the willows, rowed up the river a little way, and crossed to the opposite shore. I was now convinced they had a party formed on each shore. Shortly after I got into

[2] Jacob Melcher. See letter of March 1, above.

[3] Capt. James Bradford, of New York.

the centre of the river, I was joined by the other boat, which was about 250 yards in my rear. The first bank being overflowed for a great way below where I was fired on made it impossible for either of the boats to land. The river here was narrow, the water very high and rapid and still continuing to rise. I had now a Serg't and two men sick exclusive of the wounded which reduced my party much, and the number of the enemy being much superior had I attempted to proceed it would have been impossible for me to have had a party on shore. I thought it would be exposing them too much to have proceeded without it; it would have been putting it into the enemy's power to fire on me from every advantageous piece of ground that offered without their running any kind of risk; from these circumstances, I thought it most advisable to fall down the river, make some place of defence, and send an express to Major Wyllys, with information of my situation; in order to get a man acquainted with the country, I fell down about eighteen miles where I had passed some men trapping the day before. Immediately on my arrival I sent one of the trappers and one soldier express to Major Wyllys and raised a small block house that afternoon for my defence. My provisions were out on the 28th. About one o'clock on the morning of the first of May, one of the Sentinels discovered a boat passing down the opposite shore, very fortunately it turned out to be the contractor's loaded with provisions for the Post. I procured provisions from them for my party. I was informed by them that my express had not arrived at the Rapids. I thence concluded they had fallen in with a party of Indians. I am confirmed in this opinion, because no account of them had arrived when I left the falls on my return to this post, which was twenty-five days after my dispatching them. The presumption is that they are killed.

Having no prospect of succour from Major Wyllys I gave orders for the party to cook their provisions immediately, and embark for the Rapids, where I arrived on the 7th.

I received the public goods from Major Wyllys, many of the articles were much damaged by their getting wet, particularly the blankets & knives. I left the rapids on the 13th and arrived here with the goods on the 29th.

I hope my conduct on this occasions will meet with your approbation.

I have the honor to be with the greatest respect your obedient servant

EDWARD SPEAR, Lieut. 1st Regt.

FORT HARMAR 2nd June 1788

THE HONORABLE BRIGADIER GENERAL HARMAR

[Endorsed:] Lieutenant Spear's report of his passage to & from Post Vincennes dated Fort Harmar June 2nd 1788

HARMAR TO THE SECRETARY AT WAR, June 15, 1788

[Letterbook Copy]

FORT HARMAR June 15th 1788

SIR,

. . . .

On the 23rd May General St. Clair arrived at Fort Pitt, but as the Indians will be late in assembling to the treaty, and as he had some private affairs to attend to at Ligonier, he thought proper to return there, and informed me that he should be at Fort Pitt about the 25th of this month; it was therefore inconvenient for me to wait so long a time for his return; I left Fort Pitt in the afternoon of the 28th May, and the next night arrived at this post. Major Doughty now proceeds in the barge, and will have the honor to receive the Governor and accompany him down.

On the 13th inst. a large boat of the contractor's laden with provisions for the treaty, set out from hence for the Falls of the Muskingum; it is absolutely necessary that they should be expeditious in their movements, as the Muskingum River will soon be so low, that it will be impossible for loaded boats to ascend it. Agreeably to the Governor's request, I have granted an escort of a sub. [subaltern] serjt. corp'l & 20 privates for this boat load of provisions, and have given the officer orders to build a council room for the savages at the Falls of the Muskingum.

It gives me great satisfaction to learn by your letter of the 11th April that Mr. Tardiveau had at length delivered my dispatches of the 24th November, and that every unfavorable impression which you had received concerning him was entirely effaced. I must confess his tardiness upon this occasion appeared to me very suspicious.[1] I am happy to observe that my conduct in making the tour to the Mississippi & visiting the several villages on the American & Spanish side, has met with the approbation of Congress & yourself, which is highly satisfactory.

The provisions which I took with me to Post Vincennes was transported at the public expence and not at the expence of the contractors. The provisions which came to the rapids by orders of Messrs. Turnbull Marmie & Co. arrived too late, & was therefore not received. Mr. Britt intended to proceed to Post Vincennes with that cargo, and there to dipsose of it. He was unfortunate in passing the mouth of the Wabash in the night, and was obliged to proceed to Kaskaskias for a market, where he deposited his cargo.[2]

From the 9th of December to this day three hundred & eight boats, six thousand three hundred & twenty souls, two thousand eight hundred & twenty four horses, five hundred & fifteen cows, six hundred sheep, nine hogs & one hundred & fifty waggons have passed this garrison bound for Limestone & the Rapids. The emigration is almost incredible. It is to be observed that no boats passed until the 10th March on account of the severity of the winter; the river being shut.[3]

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[1] See above, p. 56n.

[2] See above, p. 42.

[3] Harmar made his first report to Knox on the tide of immigration down the Ohio on May 14, 1787: From October 10, 1786, until May 12, 1787, he had counted 177 boats, 2,689 individuals, 1,333 horses, 766 cattle, 102 wagons, passing the Muskingum bound for Limestone and the Rapids. On December 9, 1787, he reported that since June 1, 146 boats, 3,196 indi-

Respecting the million of acres reserved by Congress at the mouth of the Ohio for the bounty lands to the late army, you will please to observe the postscript of Major Wyllys's letter dated at the rapids the 12th May, a copy of which is enclosed, which is very favorable as to its excellence. This intelligence was given to Major Wyllys by General Clark, who has himself travelled through that part of the country, & would willingly have accepted the grant for his regiment there.[4] Major Hamtramck prefers the lands on the Illinois River or the Wabash,[5] but I believe the intelligence transmitted by Major Wyllys is to be depended upon, and would therefore give it as my opinion, that we should not hesitate to accept the lands described in the resolve of Congress beginning at the Mouth of the Ohio &c. The surveying of this tract of country, however, must necessarily be deferred until the result of the Grand Treaty is known, and the temper of the savages perfectly ascertained.

. . . .

Lieut. Spear whom I detached from hence on the 7th March returned from Post Vincennes, and brought up with him from the Rapids the remainder of the commissioners' goods. He returned on the 29 ult. and the goods are all safely deposited at this post, ready for the ensuing treaty. It is with pain I have to observe that some rascally vagabond Wabash Indians had the insolence to attack his party on their return from Post Vincennes to the Rapids, and killed two of his men. The fire was instantly returned from the troops, but as the number of the savages was uncertain, the officer acted prudently in not landing. They have an immense advantage in

viduals, 1,381 horses, 165 wagons, 171 cattle, 245 sheep, and 24 hogs had gone down the river. Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 20, 38; Harmar Papers.

[4] Wyllys wrote: "I have made some enquiries respecting the tract of country granted to us by Congress at the mouth of the Ohio, and, contrary to my expectations, am informed that it is excellent, and not such drowned lands as I was once led to suppose—I mention this, as I am informed that the officers at Muskingum lie under the same mistake." Harmar Papers.

[5] See Hamtramck to Harmar, pp. 71-72, above.

attacking boats ascending the river, indeed there can be no possible security unless our parties are strong enough to afford a flank guard on the shore. Be pleased to receive the enclosed copy of Lieut. Spear's report of his passage.[6]

Major Hamtramck informs me that the officers at the post have requested him to represent their situation to me respecting their subsistence. The place is indeed very extravagant; if they were permitted to draw a ration besides their subsistence the officers would be satisfied; I beg leave to represent this matter for your consideration.[7]

I sincerely hope that the recruiting officers will use all possible diligence in procuring good men, and marching them speedily to the frontiers. Captain Ashton has been very fortunate at the Rapids. He has re-enlisted almost the whole of his company, 57 hearty rugged fellows. Major Hamtramck has made no progress in re-engaging Captain Smith's company.

At present the following number of men are re-enlisted:

Connecticut	38
New York	45
Pennsylvania	88
	171

I am in hopes that through your exertions you will be able to furnish the old soldiers who are now re-engaged, with their current clothing for the year, and also the third suit to the three young companies. There were no linen overalls arrived in the last clothing, only one pair of woolen overalls, and those blue.

Major Doughty has my directions to hire at Fort Pitt (if practicable) two or three armourers, as we have but one in the corps, and he is at the Rapids, for the purpose of keeping the spare arms & accoutrements in the best order possible. If there are none to be had, Major Doughty will do himself the honor of writing to you from Fort Pitt upon the subject.

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[6] See Spear's report, June 2, above.

[7] See below, Harmar to Hamtramck, August 7.

I shall be happy to hear that money can be obtained for the transportation of the ordnance stores, medicine & quarter masters stores, and that they may be forwarded as soon as possible, as we are in want of them, particularly the medicine.

. . . .

Colonel Olney who is kind enough to be the bearer of this letter will inform you of the progress made in cultivation by the Ohio Company.[8] The respectable characters who are engaged in this purchase, by their industry & perseverance will most undoubtedly soon change the wilderness into a paradise.

Be pleased to receive the enclosed monthly returns of the regiment, dated the 1st May & the 1st June.

I have the honor to be, sir, with perfect esteem & respect your most h'ble & obed't. serv't,

Jos. Harmar
Lt. Col. Com'g 1st U. S. Reg't.

The honorable Major General Knox, Secretary at War, New York

[Marginal notes:] Original forwarded by Colonel Olney. Duplicate forwarded by Young Paling, who left this post on the 1st July 1788. It was forwarded from Fort Pitt on the 15th July by Samuel Fisher, the post.

Hamtramck to Harmar, June 18, 1788
[ALS]

Post Vincennes June 18, 88

Dear General, Since I had the honor of writing you my last nothing has hapened, and I have no other neuses to inform you of, but few Indians of the Vermillion and of the Weyas are out at war in Kentucky. I have the honor to inclose you a monthly return of the troops. This latter goes by a number of soldiers of Capt. Smith company who are on a pass to Muskingum, their time being out in August. Mr. Peters[1] has made out to reinlist 15 men of his company and Furgeson one.

---

[8] The Ohio Company of Associates, which contracted to purchase from the United States a tract of land lying north of the Ohio between the first Seven Ranges and the fifteenth range of townships embracing the mouths of the Muskingum and Hocking rivers. On April 7 the first settlers landed on the east bank of the Muskingum, opposite Fort Harmar, where the town of Marietta was established. Bond, *The Foundations of Ohio*, pp. 268-71, 281, map, p. 276; Dillon, *History of Indiana*, pp. 207-10; *Journals of the Continental Congress*, XXXIV, 565.

I am yet in a very indifferent state of healt[h]. I expect the fevers in me in about three hours and so every day.

Please to present my respects to Mrs. Harmar and compliments to Doughty and all your gent. I have the honor to be with very great respect and sentiments of estime your most obedient and humble servent.

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

How is your little Charles Josiah. I had a peep at him. I believe if I mistake not you have a yong lady. I hope she may be well. Our village is very sickly. Doctor Lafon[2] is gone to the Illinois, McCoy and his wife to New Orleans, Vigo to Lance a la Grasse,[3] on the Mississippi.

J. F. H.

[Addressed:] Honorable Brigadier Gen. Harmar Fort Harmar at the Muskingum

[Endorsed:] Major Hamtramck from Post Vincennes June 18th 1788. Answered October 13th, 1788.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, July 14, 1788

[ALS]

POST VINCENNES July 14th 1788

DEAR GENERAL Since I had the honor of writing you, nothing very extraordinary has happened, exepted one man and a child were killed at Sullivan Station on the 7th ult.[1]

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[1] Lieut. William Peters, of New York.

[2] Jean Baptiste Laffont, who was living at Kaskaskia at the time of Clark's conquest, and who, along with Father Gibault, served as Clark's emissary in persuading the French at Vincennes to surrender peacefully to the Americans. He was living in Vincennes in 1787 according to the census of the village that year. Alvord (ed.), *Kaskaskia Records,* xxx.

[3] Anse à la Graisse. A small settlement on the western bank of the Mississippi at the mouth of the Ohio, later site of New Madrid.

Mr. Vigo the bearer of this letter will present you his acct which I beg you will sign.[2] I can not tel you how much obligation I have to that gent. The troops of the United States as well as their interest in general would have suffered at this place had it not been for his assistance. You will see in his acct a horse hire and ten men employ'd 16 days at a dol. per man a day, also goodil of corn. The sever[it]y of the winter and the hard work of the horses has oblig'd me to give them corn, also to have a n'other horse to draw timber which was very hevy and difficult to be had. The ten men were employ'd in fetching provision from the mouth of the Wabash last winter at a time wen I was alarm'd and in a very exposed situation, my fort not being piqueted and not a block house finish. This last circumstance compelled me to hire men as I wanted every soldier to finish the garison and at that time our number fit for duty was 33.

Few days ago I had a visit from five Sakees Indians who came to see us on your invitation (as they told me). These Indians lives on the east side of the Mississipi and I am credibly inform'd that they have all last war refused to take up arms against us. They assured me of their pacific disposition towards the United States altho invited every day to commit depredations on our frontiers. I have had a long conference with them but they were not pleased when they went away for they expected great presents.

I will be much oblig'd to you if you will give such direction to Mr. Vigo as to procure me a flag. I have the honor to inclose you the deposition of Mr. McIntosh[3] a marcht [merchant] at this place, respecting a seizure made some time ago on our side of the Mississipi.[4] Mr. Vigo will also tel you every circumstances. I also inclose the deposition of a certain Jean Baptiste Tetro, respecting the two men killed.[5] This Grose Tete mentioned in the deposition is expected in twon at which time I will apprehend him and keep him in confindment til your pleasure is known, or any one of them that were in the affaire.[6]

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[1] For details of this see enclosure 2 below, the deposition of Jean Baptiste Taitro.

[2] See enclosure 1, below.

[3] William McIntosh.

I am sir with every sentiment of respect and estime your most obedient and very humble servant,

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

Please to present my best respects to Mrs. Harmar and compliments to the gent.

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brig'd Gen. Harmar Fort Harmar on the Muskingum

[Endorsed:] Major Hamtramck from Post Vincennes July 14th, 1788. Answered October 13th, 1788.

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[4] This deposition, or copy of it, was forwarded to the War Office by Harmar. St. Clair to Jay, December 13, 1788, in Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers,* II, 170; Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 105. McIntosh stated "that he had seen and had read to him by Mr. Valliere the Spanish Commandant of the Post of the Arquancas the original Letter or Orders from Don Mera [Miró] governor of Louisiana at New Orleans, directing the said Mr. Valliere to seize and confiscate the Property of all those who should be found on the Mississipi or on either Shore thereof from the mouth of the Ohio downwards as the whole of that Country belong to Spain." Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers,* II, 290. See also p. 111n below. Joseph Vallière became commandant at the Arquanças post in 1785, and remained until 1790. Dallas T. Herndon, *The High Lights of Arkansas History* (The Arkansas History Commission, 1922), p. 12.

[5] See enclosure 2, below.

[6] See Hamtramck to Harmar, February 28, and June 15, 1789, below, concerning La Grose Tête.

[Enclosure 1-Copy]

(Copy.)

United States
To Frances Vigo Dr.

For the rent of two houses furnished by order of Major Wyllys for the use of the hospital three months and a half . . . at 90/ pr M . .	£15.15
136 bushels of corn furnished by order of Major Hamtramck at 7/6 pr B	51.
Cash paid ten men employed sixteen days in fetching provisions from the mouth of Wabash to this place at 7/6 pr day &	60.
For a horse in public service 180 days at 3/9 pr day	33.15
A perouge employed in public service	1.17.6
2 Long saw files 7/6	.15
Philadelphia C[urrenc]y	£163.2.6

Post Vincennes 1 June 1788

I certify that the above articles were furnished to the troops at this place.[7]

(Signed) J. F. Hamtramck Major Com'dt

Fort Harmar, Sept. 6th 1788
(Signed) Jos. Harmar Lt. Col. Comt. 1st U. S. Regt.

[Endorsed:] Mr. Francis Vigo's Acct. against ye United States £163.2.6 P. currency (Copy)

[Enclosure 2-DS]

The Deposition of Mr. Jean Bapt. Taitro, taken to-day this fourteenth of July 1788, before the magistrates undersigned, for the district of Post Vincennes, in the house of Mr. Antoine Gamelin notary for this place.

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[7] For Hamtramck's comments on Vigo's valuable help to the troops at Vincennes, see his letter to Harmar immediately above, and also his letter of April 13, above.

The said deponent upon oath, saith and deposeth, that Thursday last, the eighth of this instant being with his family in a place called Petit Rocher by the water-side of Ouabach, being three miles from the village, about half a hour after sun-down eight Indians came to him, one of them called La-Grosse Tête of the nation Pianguichia, that the said deponent knows him well, & spoke to him, unknowing the others, the said Indians forced him to cross them over the River Ouabach, which he did, & by crossing them over, they took from him his stoars & provisions & told him, that they killed two men, that day at Little River, on which lays the plantation of Mr. Sullivan. They gave him no other sign of the murder than a big sharpe English ax, told him to say nothing about it. They advised him to go home, because two other parties were round the village for the same purpose, which he did accordingly; the deponent further saith not.

his
JEAN BAPT. x TAITRO
mark

We, by these presents, certify, that the above deposition of Jean Bapt. Taitro, has been deposed upon oath, before us, whereof we have signed these presents, & has been contre signed by Mr. Antoine Gamelin, notary for the place

POST VINCENNES 14th July 1788

JEAN BTE MILIET

MOSES HENRY

JAS. JOHNSON

VALENTINE THOMAS DALTON

his
NICOL'S x BAILLARDJON
mark

ANTOINE GAMELIN
[Notary public]

We also certify, that the eighth of this instant two men were killed, on the plantation of Mr. Daniel Sullivan, which lays on the Little River, mentionned in the deposition of Mr. Jean Bapt. Taitro.

Given under our hands this 14 July 1788

his
NICOLAS x BAILLARJON
mark

JEAN BTE MILIET
JAS. JOHNSON
VALENTINE THOMAS DALTON
MOSES HENRY

ANTOINE GAMELIN
[Notary public]

Daniel Sullivan being duly sworn, deposeth upon oath, that the day following of the murder was committed, he went in search of the boy [who] was missing, some time after searched for the ax, which could not be found, it being a large finished ax, such as appears in Mr. Tetro's deposition.

DANIEL SULLIVAN

We, by these presents, certify that the deposition of Mr. Daniel Sulivan, has been deposed upon oath before us.

Given under our hands this 14th July 1788

MOSES HENRY

his
NICOL'S x BAILLARDJON
mark

JEAN BTE MILIET

JAS. JOHNSON

ANTOINE GAMELIN
[Notary public]

VALENTINE THOMAS DALTON

[Endorsed:] The deposition of Jean Bapt. Taitro taken on the 14th July 1788 Post Vincennes

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HARMAR TO HAMTRAMCK, July 26, 1788

[Letterbook Copy]

FORT HARMAR July 26th 1788

DEAR MAJOR, I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your several letters of the 3rd November, the 1st

January, and the 13th April last, to which I shall particularly reply. The two former did not arrive until very late, otherwise they should have been answered long since. The latter was handed to me by Lieutenant Spear.

As Lieutenant Pratt before he left you, neglected to give you some wampum, I now send you by this conveyance two thousand of that article of the white sort, & one thousand of the black.

I am happy to hear of the different Indian intelligence, which you have collected & communicated to me, and also to learn that you are in such a good state of defence. I hope you are plentifully supplied with provisions, as the new contractors, Messrs. Elliot & Williams,[1] enter upon the business with spirit, and have given me the strongest assurances, that there shall be no failure in their part in throwing in the necessary supplies at the several posts. I do not wonder that both officers & soldiers were much dissatisfied at the money remaining at the Falls, which Captain Ashton brought forward. Certainly means ought to have been speedily adopted for its conveyance to Post Vincennes.

I observe that Mr. Vigo furnished you with provisions all last winter. What could Major Finley be about? You wish to know whether Mr. Vigo is to receive his pay from the public, or from the contractor. I really am apprehensive that this affair will be attended with some difficulty. Major Finley as contractor was the person to look to for supplies, but

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[1] The contract with Messrs. (Robert) Elliott & (Eli) Williams of Maryland began July 1, 1788, and ran through 1789. Their terms per ration were as follows:

at Fort Pitt	7/90 of a dollar
McIntosh	" " "
Harmar	" " "
Rapids of the Ohio	7 1/2 ninetieths of a dollar
Post Vincennes	16/90 of a dollar
Venango	9/90 " "

Thian, *Legislative History of the General Staff of the United States Army,* 328; Jacobs, *The Beginning of the U. S. Army,* p. 36; *Journals of the Continental Congress,* XXXIV, 586.

as he did not furnish them, I should think he ought to settle Mr. Vigo's accounts, and not the public.[2]

The hiring of the ten Canadians to send to the Ohio for a small supply of provisions for the troops I approve of, especially as you had so few men fit for duty, and your pickets not being up. Consequently you could spare none for that purpose. Mr. Vigo was so obliging as to pay them at the rate of a dollar pr day for their services. The public will undoubtedly reimburse him.

You wish my opinion concerning taking one or two Indians prisoners from *La Riviere a l'Anguille* and keeping them in confinement until they return the soldiers taken last summer. If you recollect, only one of our men (Seddon by name) was taken when you ascended the Wabash, and he was enlisted for one year. He since made his escape from them, and has joined the troops at this garrison.[3]

If the savages should continue this work, you will endeavour to retaliate upon them, especially if you know the nation by whom hostillities were committed.

I observe that you have had a total change of government at Post Vincennes. The copy of your regulations for the court[4] has been perused, which as far as my knowledge extends in civil matters, I think to be very proper. The same has been submitted to the consideration of the Governor, who quarters with me; he has express'd his approbation of it.

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[2] For Vigo's account, see above, pp. 70, 90, 92. Finley was subcontractor under O'Hara who had held the contract at this time to supply rations to the army.

[3] Ebenezer Denny reported in his "Military Journal," that John Siddon who had been taken prisoner on the Wabash on July 26, 1787, had made his escape and arrived at Fort Harmar on December 12. "At the time he was taken," recorded Denny, "he received a slight wound on the hip. The Indians carried him to their farthermost town on the Wabash and adopted him in a family, where he continued to live peaceably. When an opportunity offered for his escape, he left them and passed through several Delaware towns without any interruption, and arrived safe at Pittsburgh." *Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania,* VII, 316. See above Harmar to Knox, August 7, 1787, for report of his capture.

[4] See above, pp. 74-75.

I am very sensible that your officers labor under many great inconveniences respecting subsistence; I know it by experience, and have already represented their situation to the Secretary at War; at the same time soliciting that they might be permitted to draw provisions besides their subsistence, which I thought would be satisfactory to them. No answer has as yet been returned to my representation, but I flatter myself it will be attended to.[5]

Major Wyllys has given me information that the lands reserved at the mouth of the Ohio for the claimants of the late army, as described in the resolution of Congress, are of an excellent quallity. This information I have officially transmitted, and make no doubt but these lands will be surveyed accordingly, as soon as the business can be entered upon with safety.[6]

It is out of my power to furnish you with the necessary craft. The inhabitants have fleets of perrogues. Those must answer your purposes.

Vinegar is absolutely necessary with your salt provisions. I shall endeavor all in my power to have your post supplied with this article. The hospital stores ought certainly to be allowed by the public. I would have Doctor Elliot to make as moderate returns as possible. The contractors will be ordered to furnish such articles as are essentially necessary.

The office of inspector is no more.[7] I have orders that the muster & inspection is to be performed by the majors of the regiments, at least four times a year. You will therefore muster your command up to the 30th Setpember, and your next muster will be from the 30th September to the 31st December next inclusive, and transmit me the rolls.

Enclosed you will receive a copy of the contract for the quarter master's department entered into with the new contractors, to which the most particular attention must be paid.

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[5] See below, pp. 100-1.

[6] For Wyllys' information, see above, p. 86n.

[7] By action of the Congress, June 25, 1788. *Journals of the Continental Congress,* XXXIV, 263.

Be pleased to deliver the enclosed commission from the state of Pennsylvania to Lieutenant Doyle.[8]

The mode which the people in your part of the country have for preserving meat in the hottest days of summer appears to me to be very good.

As to your being permitted to grant any public land as an equivalent for that laying round the garrison, it is inadmissible.[9] After the treaty is concluded, you may expect to see the Governor & Judges at Post Vincennes, who will take the arrangement of all matters in the civil line off your hands.

The Governor will likewise give the necessary directions about the public lands—they will probably be with you some time in the fall.

Agreeably to your request I now send you bunting for a flag for your garrison.

I observe that it is the wish of Ensign Prior[10] to be in the Surgeon's Department. This cannot take place unless a vacancy for the same should offer in the New York quota, and he must then resign his commission in the regiment before he can be appointed in that line.

I am, sir, with very great esteem & respect your most h'ble serv't

Jos. Harmar
Lt. Col. Com't 1st U. S. Reg't.

Major Hamtramck Commanding Officer at Post Vincennes

[Marginal note:] Favored pr Lieut. Ford.[11]

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[8] Lieut. Thomas Doyle, of Pennsylvania.

[9] See Hamtramck's request in his letter to Harmar of April 13, above.

[10] See above, p. 73.

[11] Lieut. Mahlon Ford, of New Jersey.

HARMAR TO HAMTRAMCK, August 7, 1788

[Letterbook Copy]

FORT HARMAR August 7th 1788

DEAR MAJOR, I had the pleasure of addressing you on the 26th ult. since which I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st May last. You mention having written to me four letters; no more than three have ever come to hand, and those were acknowledged to have been received in my last letter.

You doubtless have heard of Lieut. Spear's party being fired upon, between the Wabash and the Rapids,[1] also Ensign Sedam's party on their way down from the Miami to the Falls. The same game has been played in our quarter. Ensign McDowell, whom I detached at the request of the Governor with a party of 20 men to the Falls of the Muskingum as an escort for the provisions designed for the ensuing treaty and with orders to build a council room for the savages at that place, was attacked by some Ottaways & Chippeways on the morning of the 12th Ult. and had two men killed, one missing & two wounded, one since dead. The Indians retired with the loss of two killed upon the spot and one or two wounded and six taken prisoners (two of whom have since made their escape) and the remaining four are now in irons at this garrison.[2]

From this treacherous proceeding, I thought it best with the advice of the Governor to order the party down here and all the provisions.[3] The Governor has sent a spirited message to the different nations who are now in council at the Detroit River, demanding satisfaction for this gross insult offered to the United States. No answer has as yet been returned to his message; but it may be expected in the course of ten or fifteen days. This circumstance shews that we cannot be too much upon our guard at the several posts.

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[1] See above, Spear to Harmar, June 2, 1788.

[2] Major Ebenezer Denny, stationed at Fort Harmar, recorded in his "Military Journal" on July 13, "About a month since, Ensign M'Dowell, with a command of thirty men, escorted boats with provisions, &c., to the Falls of Muskingum, about seventy-five miles up, where the intended treaty was to be held. We are informed by express that his party were attacked in their camp yesterday by a party of Tawas; that his picket guard was routed; two soldiers only were killed and one missing. A black servant of Mr. Duncan was killed. The Indians were repulsed with the loss of one killed and left behind." *Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania,* VII, 325.

New Hampshire has adopted the new Constitution, which makes the tenth state. I am in hopes the wheels of government will now be soon put in motion, in order that we may be enabled to extirpate these perfidious savages if they continue committing hostilities.

I approve of your prohibiting the Weeas from entering the village if they should continue to bring scalps into their towns after your notification to them to cease committing depredations. I sincerely wish we were authorized, & had sufficient force to chastize these villains properly. I hope the time is not far distant.

You inform me that the merchants at the post are daily making application to bring goods from Detroit, & you want to know whether they are to be permitted or not. Let matters go on in the usual channel, untill the arrival of the Governor, who will regulate all these affairs.

It is with very great pleasure that I have to inform you that my representation respecting an allowance to the officers at Post Vincennes has been attended to. My last letter from the War Office dated July the 21st contains the following favorable paragraph—

"The situation of the officers at Post Vincennes requires some alleviation—the ration which they request to draw in addition to their subsistence seems reasonable. The matter is placed before Congress, and I hope it may be directed. Untill the pleasure of Congress shall be known, you may permit each officer at Post Vincennes to draw his single ration in addition to their usual subsistence."

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[3] On July 23, Harmar informed Knox that due to the Indian attack on McDowell that he and Governor St. Clair had decided "that the party and provisions should be removed to this post," and that the "great treaty will be deferred for some time." Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 64. For St. Clair's negotiations with the Indians following this see *ibid.,* II, 81-82.

You will therefore direct that the single ration shall be drawn for each officer agreably to the above permission from the War Office.

The ranger whom you allude to, I suppose to be Lewis Severe. He will be very serviceable; re-enlist him, and if you possibly can, make it for 3 years.

I expect Mr. Ohara will arrive at this Post shortly, when I shall endeavor to get him to settle with Mr. Vigo for the provisions which he was kind enough to furnish you with last winter, so that you may be extricated from this affair.

I observe that your garrison will now be very weak, as the men's time of Captain Smith's company is daily expiring. By Lieutenant Beatty who left this Post on the 17th ult. and the bearer Lieutenant Ford, you will receive the remainder of Captain Ferguson's Company, which will be a small reinforcement to you.

Lieut. Kersey[4] was to march on the 25th or 26th ult. Upon his arrival here I shall order him down to the Falls. If the state of affairs at Post Vincennes should render it absolutely necessary that you should have an immediate re-inforcement, you must apply to Major Wyllys[5] who will furnish it from his command. It would be well for you to have the inhabitants at the Post arranged for the support of the garrison.

I am happy to learn that you are so well supplied with provisions, as appears by your returns.

The deposition of the two men who made their escape from the savages[6] evinces that the two Shawanese, Captain James & Captain Snake, were very active in plundering the Kentucky boats last spring, & murdering the people on board. It is probable these gentry may attend the treaty, when notice will be taken of them.

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[4] Lieut. William Kersey, of New Jersey.

[5] Commanding Fort Steuben at the Falls of the Ohio.

[6] See above, pp. 80-81.

I am much obliged to you for communicating to me the intelligence which you received from Detroit, as also for the return which you sent me of the number of warriors on the Wabash and the Miami.[7]

I observe that five magistrates have been elected by the suffrages of the people, amongst whom is Mr. Dalton which surprizes me a little;[8] however, I take it for granted that you will watch his manouvres. The Governor as I observed before, will upon his arrival with you regulate all these matters.

I wish that you would give over the thoughts of going to New York at least for some time, as I cannot see how you can possibly be spared. The public service requires your presence at the Post for the present.

Captain Ferguson has my permission to go down the country. Major Doughty sends him several artillery stores, and writes to him upon the occasion.

Mrs. Harmar received the pachan nuts & beaver tails which you were so obliging to send her by Lieut. Spear. They were very acceptable. She begs your acceptance of a jar of pickled walnuts, which Lieut. Ford will deliver you, and presents her respects to you.

The men of Captain Smith's company will be anxious for their discharge. They will serve as an escort for Lieut. Beatty upon his return, and can receive their discharge upon their arrival at this garrison. By Lieut. Beatty I shall expect a full and ample detail of all your transactions, and to be informed of the very minutest occurrences which have happened since the date of your last letter.

I must repeat to you the necessity of the utmost vigilance and attention at Post Vincennes in order to guard against surprize—altho' to an officer so well acquainted with discipline & duty I am convinced it is almost needless. Be pleased to present my compliments to all your officers & to the gentlemen of the village likewise.

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[7] See above, p. 80.

[8] See above, p. 79.

I am dear major with very great esteem & respect your most h'ble s't,

JOS. HARMAR
Lt. Col. Com't 1st U.S. Reg't.

MAJOR HAMTRAMCK Commanding Officer Post Vincennes
[Marginal note:] Forwarded pr. Lieut. Ford

HARMAR TO CAPT. HENRY VANDERBURGH

[Letterbook Copy]

FORT HARMAR August 7th 1788

SIR, I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th April last, and observe that it is your wish to have some appointment either in the Indian or civil department in the Western Territory.[1] You may be assured sir, that it will afford me peculiar pleasure to be able in any way to effect it for you. I have already mentioned the matter to His Excellency the Governor who quarters with me, and I make not the least doubt but he will pay the necessary attention to it, at a proper season. You may expect to see him at Post Vincennes some time next fall.

Mrs. Harmar received the pachan nuts, which you were so obliging to send her by Lieut. Spear. She is under obligations to you for your politeness and desires her respects may be offered to you.

I am, Sir, with esteem your very h'ble serv't,

JOS. HARMAR

CAPTAIN VANDERBURG at Post Vincennes
[Marginal note:] Forward pr Lieut. Ford.

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[1] Vanderburgh was placed in command of the militia of Vincennes and vicinity on June 27, 1790, and was commissioned a judge of the probate court and a justice of the peace for Knox County on August 12, 1791. Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers,* III, 314, 356.

Capt. William Ferguson to Harmar, August 11, 1788

[ALS]

Post Vincennes Augst. 11th 1788

Sir As the time of service of my men will expire early in the spring I beg leave to inform that should they be continued at this place untill then I will stand a bad chance of getting many of them; the whole of the troops here are so disgusted with this place that its very difficult to get any of them to reinlist. They have received of the ration little more than the bread & beef & that sometimes very bad particularly the bread since last Christmas. Whiskey, soap, candles, & vinegar are seldom or ever issued. By this you will observe that full a one third if not better of the value of the ration is detained. The soldier is obliged to live on two thirds of that which is bearly sufficient to subsist him particularly at this place where they have had such hard duty & as every article of provision are so extrava[ga]ntly high. We are also very sickly & to add to our misery the doctor has not one single grain of either tarter-emetic or bark.

These with many other reasons that might be given have sowered the minds of the men to such a degree that they will run all risques to go to any other posts rather than engage here. Therefore [I] wish it was consistant with the good of the service & that you thought proper to remove the company either late this fall or early in the spring to the Falls of Ohio. There I h[ope it w]ould be in my power to get a number of the most valuable of them. I am also informed its a bad place to get recruits, but this I suppose would answer best in winter.

I have inlisted George Neace & Charles Junghart of Capt. Ziglers company who were left here. You will oblige me by ordering on their pay & clothing of which they are much in want.

By a late unfortunate strock[1] of which you will be fully

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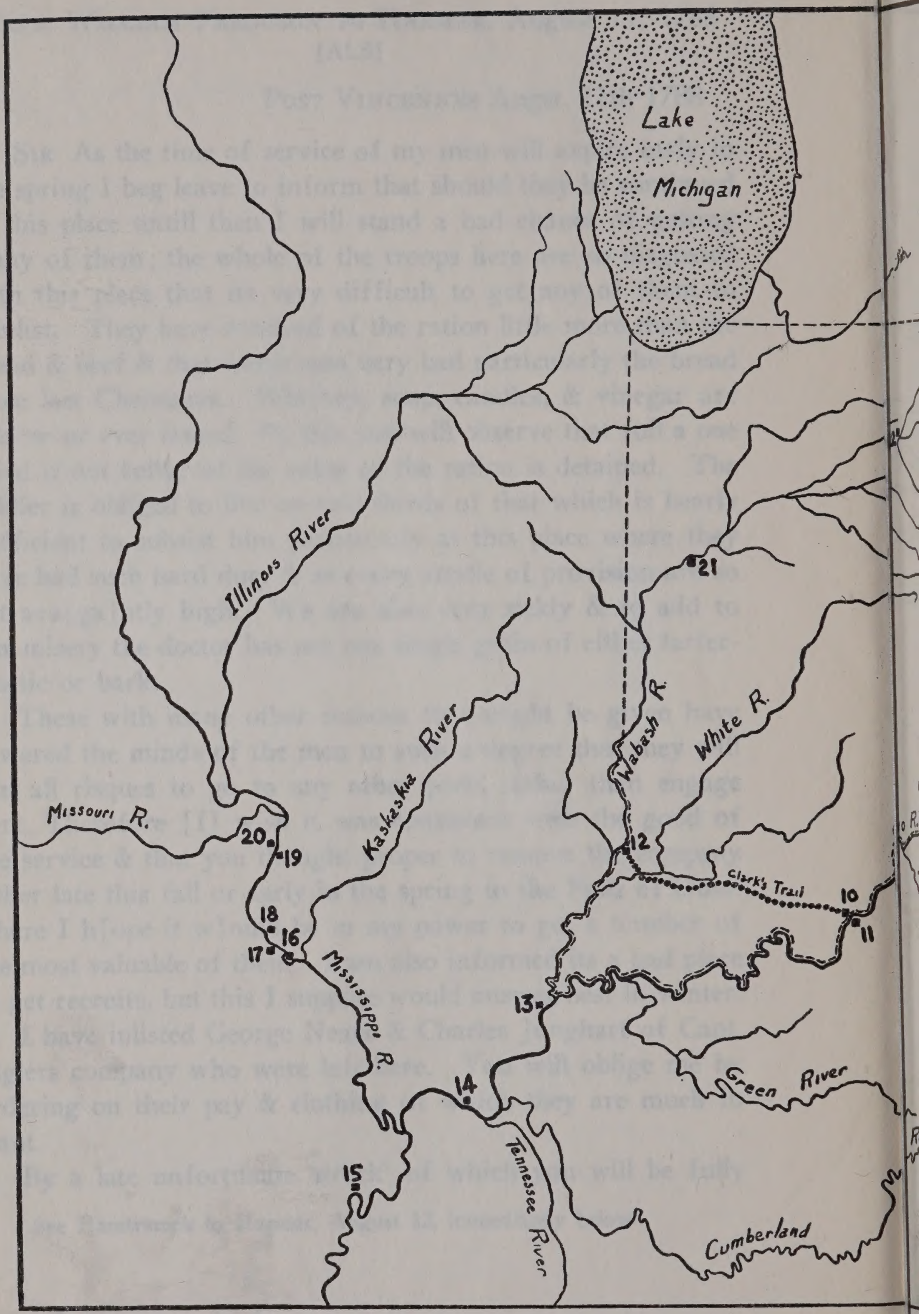
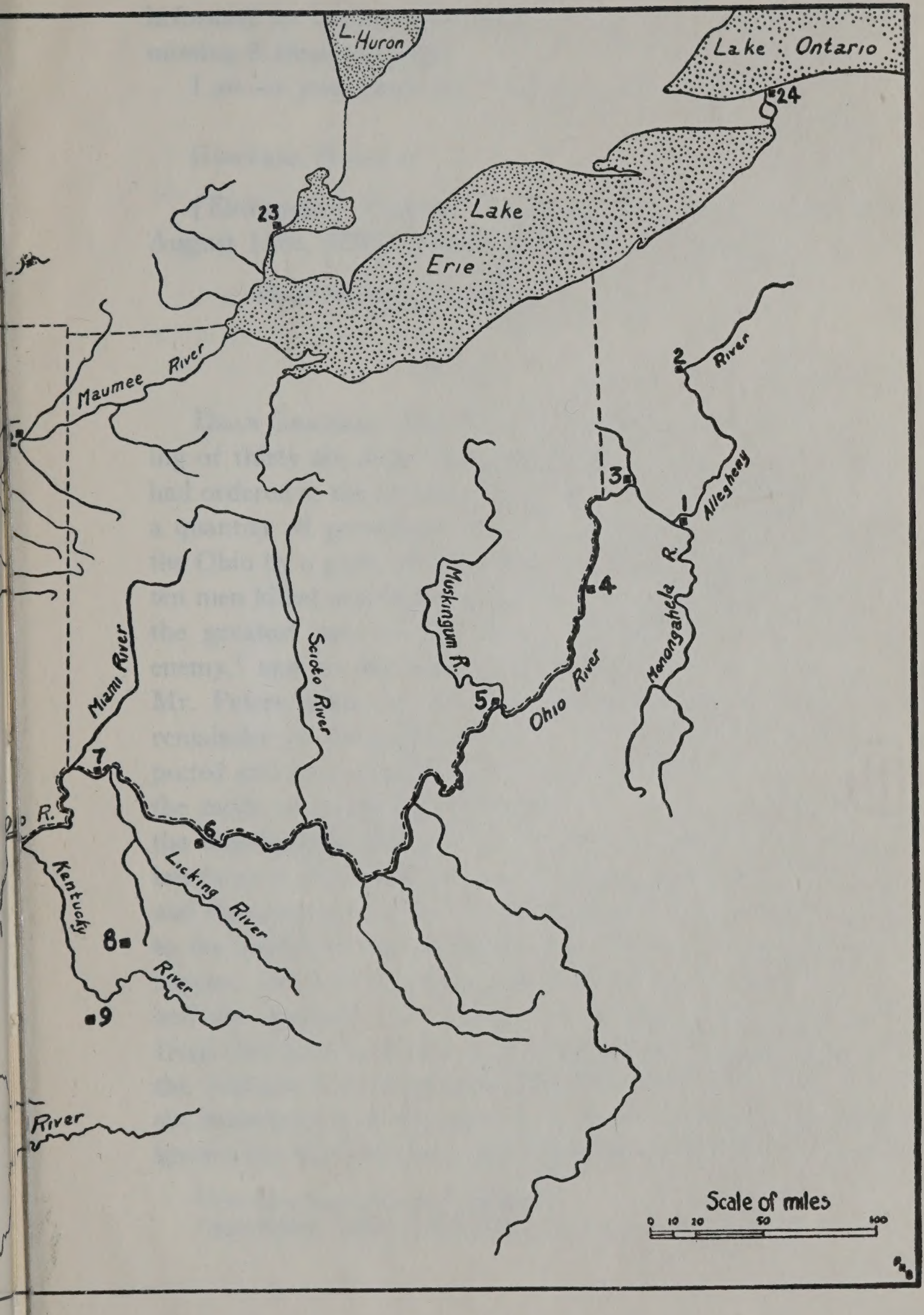
[1] See Hamtramck to Harmar, August 12, immediately below.


Lake
Michigan
Illinois River
Kaskaskia River
Missouri R.
Mississippi R.
Wabash R.
White R.
Clark's Trail
Green River
Tennessee River
Cumberland
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21


L. Huron
Lake Ontario
24
23
Lake
Erie
Maumee River
2
River
Allegheny
1
3
Monongahela R.
4
Muskingum R.
Scioto River
Miami River
5
Ohio River
7
o R.
6
Kentucky
Licking River
8
River
9
River
Scale of miles
0
10
20
50
100

The Western Country

KEY

1. Fort Pitt (Pittsburgh)
2. Fort Franklin
3. Fort McIntosh
4. Wheeling
5. Fort Harmar
6. Limestone (Maysville)
7. Fort Washington
8. Lexington
9. Danville
10. Fort Steuben
    (built 1786, first called Fort Finney)
11. Louisville
12. Fort Knox and Post Vincennes
13. Old Shawneetown
14. Site of Fort Massac
15. New Madrid (Anse à la Graisse)
16. Kaskaskia
17. Ste. Geneviève
18. Prairie du Rocher
19. Cahokia
20. St. Louis
21. Ouiatanon
22. Miami Village (site of Fort Wayne)
23. Detroit
24. Fort Niagara

informed by Major Hamtramck I lost four men killed, one missing & three wounded.

I am sir your most obd. humble serv't

W. FERGUSON

GENERAL HARMAR

[Endorsed:] Captain Ferguson from Post Vincennes, August 11th, 1788 Answered October 14th, 1788.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, August 12, 1788

[LS]

POSTE VINCENNES August 12th 1788

DEAR GENERAL The 27 of July a party of soldiers consisting of thirty six under the command of Lieut. Peters which I had ordered to the mouth of the Wabash to bring up and escort a quantity of provisions, was attacked about two miles from the Ohio by a party of 50 Indians. The loss was considerable, ten men killed and eight wounded, two pirogues that contained the greatest part of the cargo fell into the hands of the enemy,[1] and as the Indians lined both shores of the river, Mr. Peters made for the Kaskaskias in order to secure the remainder of the public stores.[2] It is what I have long expected and have repeatedly protested to Major Wyllys against the mode of supplying this place. From the moment I took the command of this place I proposed to throw in provisions but twice a year, observing at the same time to Major Wyllys and the contractors, that if I was obliged to send every month to the mouth of the Wabash some accident would inevitably happen, and I have particularly pointed out to Major Wyllys and the contractor the impropriety of getting boats and men from this place to bring up the provisions from the mouth of the Wabash, for this reason, that the express who comes with the information of the coming of the provision to me always knows the business he comes upon which he tells to the inhabitants and of consequence is known to the Indians, who if badly disposed could at all times cut off the boats. They might as well send expresses to the Indian villages to inform them of the provisions coming up.

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[1] For the cargo lost, see p. 120 below.

[2] For Peters' report on this affair, see below, August 23.

This mischief I have no doubt was committed by the Indians who were in town when the party went down, for that day 30 Indians left the village on horseback and have not yet returned. Another reason I have repeatedly offered is that the people of the village being apprehensive of danger refused to go down and I have been obliged to send soldiers to work the boats beside the escort, which rendered the garrison very weak. In my last I observed to Major Wyllys that if I was obliged to send so large a detachment out of so small a command, I could not answer for the safety of the garrison, for since Mr. Peters has been gone, I had but 12 or 14 fit for duty. This accident will diminish the number of our men and the men's time of Capt. Smith's company is daily expiring. I shall again beg of Major Wyllys to furnish such escorts as may be wanting, which in my opinion ought never to be less than sixty men, who can return by land to the Falls.[3]

We are now without an ounce of flour, pork we have for about two months, and I am much afraid that all communication between me and Wyllys will be shut both by land and water. If so I shall be in a distressed situation for provision.

The village is very sickly as well as the soldiers, and the doctor informs me he has not an emetic and has not had for a long time an ounce of bark. I beg you would be pleased to send a pretty large supply, for the men are suffering, and we have some to repay of what was borrowed last summer.

[3] Wyllys was not without his own troubles. On August 23, 1788, he reported to Harmar that Peters had been attacked and added that he was preparing to send another supply of provisions to Fort Knox within three days, with an escort of forty-five men including Lieut. Mahlon Ford's detachment. "I should be able to add more to it," he wrote, "had I craft for transportation—as the men are recovering from the fever fast—about one half of whom have been seized at a time since the first of the month." Harmar Papers.

Capt. Ferguson tells me he has wrote to you respecting the reinlisting of his company.[4] I believe that if it was relieved he might have better success than at this place, for the soldiers do not like the post. If you thought proper to have it relieved, I believed artillery men would be better than infantry for I know nothing myself of artillery.

Mr. Peters is not yet arrived and do not expect him before the 21st. I fear for him as he must come from Kaskaskias by land.

Since I have wrote the above an Indian that I had sent as an express to the mouth of the Wabash is returned and tells me that he has seen a large canoe in which was 18 paddles, that it appeared to him to come from below, that he also traced the path the enemy had made and that it went down the river which induced him to believe that they were Cherokees that had made the stroke. I have also three other men down the river that I had sent in a canoe thinking they would see Mr. Peters. I have not had the least information of them, perhaps they not finding Mr. Peters have taken the same rout, as I am told Mr. Peters left in writing on a board the accident he had met with.

The frequent conferances the commanding officer has at this place with the Indians for the want of a Commissioner for Indian Affairs, also the necessity of often sending expresses to the Falls, obliges me to request such things as may be presented to Indians, for it is almost impossible to part good friends unless you make them presents. They are accustomed to it and they expect it. Also a little money would be very necessary to pay for services done or things that cannot be procured without. I will be much obliged to you if you will be so good as to send me some wampum. I have ben obliged to buy from time to time to the amount of thirty dollars. I shall also be much obliged to you to send me a couple of good boats for I have not one to the garrison as the price of pirougs will be as much as a boat with you.

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[4] See above, August 11, 1788.

*I have the honor to inclose you a ground plan of the garrison, to which I beg you will give a name.[5] The money that Capt. Ashton brought down is still at the Falls. I also inclose monthly return of the two companies.

Jean Baptiste Constan, the interpreteur from the Weya you had last year, is now in twon and tels me that he has been to the Miami at which place he staid some time and that every day 5 & 6 scalps were brough in by those Indians, that a number of our prisoner were burnt. He also tels me that when he left the Weeya village a courier had arrived from Capt. McKee[6] the British commissionair for Indian affairs to request their chiefs to attend to a treaty that was to be at La Roche Dubout which is about thirty six miles from Detroit on this side, that the chiefs were gone and not yet return'd. Pakane the Indian chief who went after the drumer the deserter last year and a good Indian, is going to the Miami and will know the result of this conscil.

I have repeatedly send word to the Wabash Indians that Congress would not suffer their subject to be killed every day, that they no doubt would be chastised if they continued to comit depredation, and the only answer is that it is their yong men and cannot prevent it.

I have the honor to be with every sentiment of respect and estime your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. Hamtramck

Be pleased to present my respect to Mrs. Harmar and my compliments to the officers.

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brig'd General Harmar Fort Harmar on the Muskingum

[Endorsed:] Major Hamtramck from post Vincennes August 12th, 1788. Answered October 13th, 1788. Copy

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* From here on this letter is in Hamtramck's hand.

[5] For Harmar's reply to this, see p. 138 below.

[6] Capt. Alexander McKee.

enclosed to the Secretary at War in my letter of September 14th, 1788.[7]

LIEUT. WILLIAM PETERS TO HAMTRAMCK, August 23, 1788[1]

[ALS]

POST VINCENNES 23d Augt. 1788

REPORT OF THE TRANSACTIONS DURING MY COMMAND TO THE MOUTH OF WABASH

Agreeable to your orders I embarked on the evening of the 22d July for the mouth of Wabash where I arrived on the morning of the 24 Landed the men & incamped on the point. On the 26th in the morning at 11 oclock, the Contractor's Boat arrived. The remainder of the day was spent in loading the barge & three perogues. Early in the morning of the 27th Atempted to ascend the Wabash. After going about two miles up the river meeting with a very strong current in consequence of a small island which lay on my right compelled me to keep close in shore, when I was sudenly fired on by a party of Indians, not less in number than fifty. The fire commenced on the perogues which were about thirty yards in my rear & was instantly extended to the Barge where I had one man killed and six wounded. The enemy by this time being exposed to an open view I thought proper to employ part of the bargmen in firing on them during which time the remainder were busy in turning the boat down the stream, when her bow

[7] In this letter to Knox, Harmar mentioned the attack on Lieut. Peters and commented: "This transaction shows the Wabash Indians are for war—and it is high time that they were severely chastized." Harmar Papers. In July, Knox had written to Harmar: "Should the depredations of the Wabash Indians become general, the post at St. Vincennes will require your constant attention. If it can be supported effectually, the works ought to be strengthened, as much as possible, an ample quantity of provisions placed in the magazine for a blockade of some length—the inhabitants of the post arranged for the support of the garrison—in fine, every arrangement made as if a blockade were about to take place. . . ." Letter of July 21, 1788. Harmar Papers.

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[1] Enclosed in Hamtramck to Harmar, August 31, 1788, below.

struck the island where I took in three men who had escaped from the perogues. Out of fifteen men which were employed in the perogues there were eight killed two wounded & two missing, one of which has since arrived. The enemy immediately seized & secured two of the perogues. They then lined both shores and from appearance could not be less in number than one hundred. This circumstance of there being on both sides of the river prevented me effectually from takin possession of the point as I intended.. I then droped down the stream with a design to fortify myself some where on the Ohio. But on a further examination I found it impossible to convey to you any inteligence of my situation, not having a man on board who would undertake the journey by land. Thus circumstanced with only fourteen men fit for duty I found it totally impossible to make the second attempt up the Wabash. And thought it most advisable to proceed to Kaskaskas in order to secure the remainder of the contractor's property, Where I arrived on the 7th and continued till the 14th Augt. during which time I provided quarters for five wounded men who are left at that place.

On the 15th I set out with the remainder of my command for this place where I arrived on the 21 instant.

The loss of the enemy could not be very well ascertained but from the best account which I can learn they must have lost several men as they were greatly exposed during most of the engagment.

I am, sir, your most obt. hbl. sevt.

MAJOR HAMTRAMCK WILL'M PETERS Lt.

[Addressed:] Major Hamtramck Commanding Post Vincennes

[Endorsed:] Report of Lieut. Peters

JOSEPH ST. MARIE TO HAMTRAMCK, August 26, 1788

[Copy]

SIR In pursuance to the antient usage and custom of this country, I, in the month of November last applied for and obtained leave of absence on a trading voyage; in consequence of which and of my right as a Freeman and citizen of the United States of America I loaded a petty augur with several goods and merchandizes to the amount of five thousand nine hundred and forty one livres and fifteen sols in peltry currency of this place, equal to one thousand nine hundred and eighty dollars and forty two ninetieths of a dollar and sent them under the care and management of my clerk Mr. Swimmer with directions to proceed down the Mississipi River to trade them off with the Indian nations living within the boundaries of the United States of America.[1]

Mr. Swimmer accordingly set out and went down that river to a place called the Chicasaw Lake, which is situated about ninety leagues down from the River Ohio, about twenty leagues higher than where the English fort of the Arquanças formerly stood and in about 34° 40′ of north latitude according to Huchins's map, where he pitched his camp on the east or American side of the Mississipi in the neighbourhood of some friendly Indians who were there hunting.

Here after a few days stay he was taken up by an order from Mr. Valliere, the Spanish commandant at the post of the Arquanças, by a party of Spanish soldiers, sent from that fort, who at the same time seized the petty augur and the goods and carried them together with my clerk and the other hands in the boat to the Spanish fort, where Mr. Valliere, the commandant, seized and confiscated the property for the use of the Spanish king, at the same time informing the men that his orders from the governor of Louisiana at New Orleans[2] were express to seize and confiscate all property which might be found on the Mississipi or on either of its shores any where below the mouth of the Ohio, and to send the persons of those found with such goods prisoners to him at New Orleans.

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[1] St. Marie was a prosperous trader of Vincennes. This letter is printed in Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers,* II, 288-91. A copy was enclosed in Hamtramck's letter to Harmar, August 31, below, and Harmar in turn forwarded it to the War Department. It was then sent to the Continental Congress along with the deposition of William McIntosh and other papers mentioned, pp. 90-91n, above. See below, p. 154. These reached the Congress on the eve of its dissolution and the new Federal Congress took no action on them. *Ibid.,* II, 290. On July 22, 1790, St. Marie gave a copy of the letter to Winthrop Sargent, secretary of the Northwest Territory, when he was at Vincennes. Sargent in turn sent the copy to President Washington. *Ibid.,* II, 288, 294.

Being very soon after inform'd of this transaction I went myself to the Arquanças and applied to the Spanish commandant for a restoration of my property, who in very peremptory terms refused giving them up, alledging his before mentioned orders and adding that I might take it as a great favor that my clerk and hands as well as myself were not confined and sent in irons to Orleans as prisoners. When I reasoned on my right as an American subject to traffic in the American dominions and that my property was seized in the territory to which I conceived America had an undoubted right, he stopped me short by informing me that the country on both sides of the River Mississipi as high up as the mouth of the River Ohio belonged to Spain, and that the whole of the country on the east side of the Mississipi from the mouth of the Ohio downwards was then under the Spanish government.

Surprized at this information and not being satisfied that the governor had really given such orders I went to New Orleans and on or about the thirteenth day of May last obtained an audience of the Governor Don Mero, who as soon as informed of my name, asked me in very haughty terms, how I could have the audacity to appear before him on the subject of the seizure of my property. That altho' I was a Frenchman born, yet that I then was an American subject, and that if he the governor was to follow his orders from the Court of Spain, he would send me prisoner to the mines of Brazil and then concluded in a threatening manner with bidding me depart from thence and be no more seen, which last orders I was glad to obey and withdraw myself as soon and as far as possible from such despots without receiving any satisfaction.

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[2] Esteban Miró.

Thus circumstanced my only and last resource is to the Honorable the Congress of the United States of America as guardians of the rights and liberties of her subjects whose persons have been seized and properties confiscated on her acknowledged territory by an armed force in pursuance to the orders of a foreign prince.

From the time that the name of an American has been known in this country I have been a subject of the United States of America. I have fought in the defence of that country whose subjects a Spanish commandant is hardy enough to oppress. I am now unless government interferes without any remedy for a loss which will reduce me with a wife and a numerous family to the utmost distress.

I must beg of you, sir, to make known my case to Congress in such manner as you shall think proper and as speedily as possible, as in me the rights of sovereignty of America as well to a very extensive territory as to the navigation of the Missisipi any where below the mouth of the River Ohio has been invaded; my cause is become public cause and will in its consequences determine a grand national question.

I dare hope and trust that as a national inhabitant of this country, and as one of the first subjects of America in it, I shall be thought worthy the protection of Congress and that they will adopt some means to give satisfaction and recompence for my losses.

To convince you and the world of the justice of my cause I propose to make oath before the magistrates of the truth of the whole of the case as before stated, and shall when ever called upon produce proper vouchers and proofs to authenticate the same.

I am Sir your most obed't & very humble serv't

Joseph St. Marie

Post Vincennes 26th August 1788

Post Vincennes ss

On the twenty sixth day of August 1788 personally appeared before us the subscribers magistrates of the District of Post Vincennes, Joseph St. Marie of the same place, merchant-trader who made oath on the holy Evangelists of Almighty God that the above state of his case is just and true. In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands and seals the day and year before written

JEAN BTE MILIET
VALENTINE THO'S DALTON

TO MAJOR HAMTRAMCK 1st U. S. Regiment & Commandant at Post Vincennes.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, August 31, 1788

[ALS]

POST VINCENNES August 31st 1788

DEAR GENERAL On the 18th of this month one Patrick Brown who calls himself a major and from Nelson County in Kentucky, arrived on the other side of the river with about sixty men.[1] He waited on me and informed me that he was after Indians and had killed nine that morning. I asked him by whose authority he came into the teretory of the United States to make war? He told me that it was by order of his governor. I asked him for his orders and commission but finding himself so much pushed he made some frivolous excuse saying he had them not with him or about him. I then told him that I did not believe that he had any orders to come into the teretorys of the United States to make war, that possibly he had ordres to follow Indians as it is directed by an act of the Assembly of Kentucky (as I am inform'd) to have a body of troops to follow any body of Indians who may come in to their settlements to comit depredation, but that there was a great differance between following Indians who had forfeited their lives, or looking out for others that were in a pasific state and under the protection of the United States. I told him that I did not know any authority but that of Congress who could order a war with the Indians; in co[n]sequence of which I ordered him in the name of *the United States* to depart immediatly, and told him I should report him. He asked me to put him a cross the Wabash River with his men. I refused him, declaring that the service he was on could not permit me to give him the least assistance and

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[1] Patrick Brown, who moved into Kentucky in 1782, participated in the Battle of Blue Licks (August 19, 1782) in which his brother James was killed. Indian fighting seems to have been his particular forte. He was with the Kentucky troops under Col. William Oldham at St. Clair's defeat (1791) and he commanded in the last Indian fight in his part of Kentucky in August, 1792. In this last encounter he and a party of about sixteen men pursued an equal number of Indians to a site on the Rolling Fork of Salt River. Three of the whites were killed as were several of the Indians. The remainder of the Indians were dispersed. Brown served as a justice in the first court held in Hardin County and was a member of the Second Constitutional Convention of Kentucky in 1799. As a member of an ardent antislavery faction he refused to sign the Constitution which recognized slavery. Brown thereafter freed the slaves he owned and about 1814 moved to the free soil of Indiana. He acquired land near Madison, where he lived until his death in 1835, aged seventy-five. William Allen Pusey, "Three Kentucky Pioneers: James, Patrick, and William Brown," in *The Filson Club History Quarterly,* IV, number 4 (October, 1930), 170-73. Patrick Brown's Revolutionary record shows that he served with the Virginia troops from May, 1778, to October, 1782, attaining the rank of sergeant-major, and that he was a member of George Rogers Clark's expedition on the Little Miami in 1780. He married Elizabeth Paul, sister of Col. John Paul

the founder of Madison, Indiana. *Roster of Soldiers and Patriots of the American Revolution Buried in Indiana* (n. p., 1938), p. 74.

On September 14, Governor St. Clair reported to Secretary at War Knox on an expedition against the Wabash Indians which was probably the one commanded by Patrick Brown and deplored by Hamtramck: "There is intelligence which I believe may be depended upon, that the Indians at the mouth of the Wabash having been discovered, a party from Kentucky went to attack them: that, missing them there, they crossed and marched to the Salines (Salt River, I believe of Mr. Hutchins), went up that river to its head branches, and crossed from thence to the upper part of the Riviere de l'Embarras, where they fell in with and had an action with the Indians, some of whom were killed. They returned by Post Vincennes and Clarke's Trace to the Falls, and brought on with them six scalps, seven rifles, and twenty horses. But whether these were the Indians that made the stroke at the mouth of the Wabash, or not, does not appear." Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 90. The "stroke at the mouth of the Wabash," was probably the attack on Lieut. Peters' convoy. See above, letter of August 23.

ordered him not to cross near the village, that I also should insist on his returning such horses as belonged to the French, Americans, and Indians under my protection. He promised me he would but did not comply. He also contrary to my orders broke the padlocks which fastened the canoes and crossed the river at the twon. I could have prevented him with the canon of the fort, but did not think the affair of sufficient consequence to spill blood, beside I wanted to get the horses which could not be done but by gentle means, not having sufficient force to compel him. The magistrates and poeple in twon after he had crossed the river waited on him and painted to him the mischief he had done, the consequances of his conduct and forbided him to pass t[h]rough the village. I also sent Capt. Furgeson twice to him to demand the horses he had belonging to Pakan and dire[c]ted Capt. Furgeson to inform him that Pakan and his Indians were imployed in the service of the United States (which is the case, for all the true intelligence [I] have been able to collect from different places has been by those Indians who have given me convincing proof of their fidelity and have now Pakan at the Miami to know the result of a consel which is to be held at *la Roche du Bout* by the British Commissioner for Indian affairs).

All those reason would not do. Six horses were too great a price to be return'd, and I was forced to the humiliating necessity of leting him keep the horses. Never was my feeling so much wonded before. But what could I do? I had but nine men fit for duty, the American militia would not have fought them if I had been able to have marched 50 men, what French there was in twon at that time would have joined me cheerfully and would have perhaps persuaded Mr. Brown to accept of my propositions.

The Indians they have killed were of La Demoisel's band, and of Pakan. Perhaps you may recollect La Demoisel. He had your protection and Pakan was one who went with you to the Illinois.

The next day I called in to consel all the Indians in twon and explained to them who those people were, and took every possible measure to persuade them that it was not done by any lafull authority, and that I disaproved of their conduct. Some concluded to stai in the vicinity of the village, others are gone to the Weeya and Pakan Indians are at La Tere Haute waiting for the return of Pakan. What will be the consequance of this accident time will determine. I am in hopes that I have persuaded them not to revange on us. Our garison is very sickly and no medicine.

I have the honor to inclose you Lt. Peters report,[2] also the petition of Mr. Joseph St. Mary[3] praying Congress to examine into a seizure made on his property and on the teretories of the United States by a body of Spanish troops. I also send the return of the provision lost at the Mouth of the Wabash.

I will be very much oblig'd to you if you will be pleased to give me direction how I am to act with the contractors.[4] They will I suppose demand a certificate of the lost and other expences attending it, such as expresses &c. I shall not do anything until I have your direction. This was the first provision they had send since their contract; how and in what maner they expected I was to lieve I know not. The provision which was in store belonging to Ohara I have been oblig'd to seize, promising for it the same price they (Ohara) had during the contract.[5] If the price the new contractors gets is not so much as that of Ohara, I presume they will object to pay me what I have been oblig'd to give to Ohara; in that case I shall be exceedingly oblig'd to you to informe me how I am to secure myself. The supplys of this place have been so irregular that I should have been oblig'd long ago to have evacuated the place if I had not had credit in the village and if a garrison should be established in the interior part of the country where assistance could not be obtained from the inhabitans, I venture to say that such garrison will inevitably fall unless a nother mode of supply takes place.

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[2] See above, August 23, 1788.

[3] See above, August 26, 1788.

[4] Elliott & Williams. See above, p. 95.

[5] On November 11, 1788, John Finley, agent for the contractor O'Hara at the Falls of the Ohio, reported to O'Hara that the amount of provisions at Vincennes belonging to O'Hara seized by Hamtramck amounted to 11,920 rations of pork, 176 rations of bacon, 4,136 rations of flour. Harmar Papers. For further discussion of this transaction, see below, pp. 140-41n, 151, 157.

In my letter pr Mr. Vigo I mentioned that I had been obliged to employ ten men for 16 days at a dol pr man a day to fetch provision from the mouth of the Wabash. At that time I was very much alarmed and in a very expos'd situation, my fort not being then piqueted and not a block house finished which oblig'd me to keep the soldiers at home. This happened in the mounth of March at which time I am inform'd Ohara had the contract for this place, which if so he ought to pay that expence or otherwise he can not be intitled to the great quantity of meat I bought for the public at this place at the moderate price of 5 d/o Pens. money pr. pound. I will keep their abstra[c]ts in to my hand until you informe me how I must govern myself, for certainly if they had the contract at that time the public was not oblig'd to fetch their provision, of consequance they should pay the ten men.

Not one article I have send a return for, as yet arrived. The three men that went down the river are gone to the Illinois.[6] If a reinforcment could be obtain it is very much wanted. We have had for some time pass but 19 men fit for duty. The poeple are very impatient to see Genr. St. Clair or some of the judges.[7] In fact they are very much wanted.

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[6] The three men sent to aid Lieutenant Peters, referred to in Hamtramck's letter of August 12, p. 107 above.

[7] St. Clair was at Fort Harmar at this time awaiting word from the Indians assembled at Detroit as to the prospects of a council and treaty with them. On September 2 he wrote the Secretary at War, ". . . the detention I have met with has prevented any attention being paid to the settlement on the Wabash and Mississippi, where I believe it is much wanted. So soon as the treaty closes, I shall proceed to those countries, but the season is so far advanced already, that it appears probable our residence for the winter must be taken up here." Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 87.

The troops of the uper posts are relieved by the 65th regiment. One Major Farnham Close commands at Detroit.

This moment Mr. Henery brought me two Shawnees who tels me that the Indians are very indifferent about going to your treaty, that if the[y] go, it will be in the autumn, that Capt. McKees who is the British commissionair for the Indian affairs had told them not to go, that the treaty would answer nothing, that altho' Gov. St. Clair should promiss them peace, that the Kentuck poeple would brake it immediatly. They also told me that the Indians who killed your men at Muskingum were of the Chapeway nation,[8] that every day their were scalps and prisoners brought at the Miami and many of the prisoners burn, and that those Indians were clear for war. La Demoisele assures me that a friend of his had come from the Weeya to tel him that the Miami Indians with those of the Wabash had concluded to pay me a visit in the fall, that the Indians of the Wabash had send to the Sacs to join them in that opperation which (I am inform'd) they refused. The Indians who have destroy'd our boats at the mouth of the Wabash are the Kikapoos who lieves near the Illinois River. Their is about 300 men of them.

The village is very sickly. Most every day for a week past 3 and 4 children dies.

Will you be pleased to present my respects to Mrs. Harmar and Doughty, also my compliments to the gentlemen of the garrison and believe me to be with every sentiments of respect and estime your most obedient and very humble servent.

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[8] Hamtramck refers to the attack on Ensign McDowell at the Falls of the Muskingum. See above, p. 99. His view coincides with St. Clair's report to the Secretary at War on July 22: "A party of Chippawas came into that station [Falls of the Muskingum] a day or two after the affair there. Their behavior gave the officer reason to believe that they had ill intentions, and both he and Mr. Duncan (the person who furnished the provisions, and who was there for the delivery of it) were of opinion that they had been engaged in the outrage, and were positive as to one of them, whom they actually saw kill one of the soldiers; he, therefore, thought it proper to make them prisoners. They are now here, six in number, and in close confinement." Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 63.

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

[Postscript:] Capt. Vanderburgh request of me to present you his respects, I believe if I mistake not he has some expectation on you. J. F. H.

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brig'd Gen'r Harmar Fort Harmar on the Muskingum

[Endorsed:] Major Hamtramck from Post Vincennes August 31st 1788 Answered February 15th, 1789

[Second endorsement:] Maj'r Hamtramck desires me to read the enclosed, and then seal it, John P. Wyllys

[Enclosure—ADS]

Account of Sundry Provisions Shipped at the Falls of Ohio a/c Elliott & Williams contractors, for the Use of the Garrison at Post Vincennes—Viz.—

80	Barrells	Cont'g	17295	lbs Flour
6	do	do	215	Galls Whiskey
4	Tierces	do	1733	lbs Pork
3	Barrells	do	16 1/2	Bushells Salt
2	do	do	237	lb Bacon
in Bulk			280	do

Out of the above quantity, there was taken at the Mouth of Wabash, a/c the Indians 11395 lbs Flour, 1733 lbs Pork, 5 1/2 Bushells Salt, 180 Galls Whiskey and 354 lbs Bacon.

20th August 1788 ANTHONY SMYTH

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, October 13, 1788

[ALS]

POST VINCENNES Oct. 13th 1788

DEAR GENERAL I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipts of your letters of the 26th July and the 27th [7th?] of August last. Taking for granted that you have recived my letter by Mr. Vigo I send you the duplicates of my two last the 1st of the 12 and the other of the 23d [31st] of August

. . . .

The wampum you was pleased to send me and the flag arrived safe but the iron &c was left at the falls of the Ohio. My present supplies are tolerable but if you thought propre six month's provision would provid against accident. Some French men who were hunting on the Ohio at the time that our boats were defeated came acros the provision which the Indians had secreted. Two or three of them took a little in a canoe leaving the rest of the men to take care of the reminder, and came to the garrison. They informed me that they had found little provision w[h]ere our poeple had been defeated which they had in their canoe and asked me if I would have it. This uncomon generosity from poor men, and from the character of one of them led me to reflection and suspecting that it was only a tryal to find out what measure would be necessary for them to take in order to secure their grab which I suspected them to have made; I told them that they might keep it, that it was a cargo lost.

A few days after one of those men (Melbeck) who is one of the greatest rascal that this country ever produced, came to me and asked for a pass to go to the mouth of the Wabash to kill buffaloes which I granted him. He then went to inform his companions of the little difficulty he had had with me respecting the provision and told them that I had made a sacrifice and had told him that it was a cargo lost. On those assurance they loaded two pirogues with 4010 lb of flour and arrived in twon on the 13th Sept. at night when they were apprehended and they and the flour secured. One of their comarade who had been afraid to come with them had drawn his share which was fourteen barrils of flour and had gone to *Lance a la Graise* on the Mississipi. I immediately appointed a board of officers to enquire how those poeple came by that provision for I then suspected them very much to be conserned with the Indians, and altho' it does not appear so by their examination, I still think they were, for in my opinion the Indians never would have left the provision in the maner, being master of the gro[u]nd and in no danger.

The original of the examination I have the honor to inclose,[1] since which I have given them their liberty except Mr. Melbeck who has once been condamned at Detroit to be hung'd for a nother robery, but was pardoned. I have judged necessary to make an example of him and have ordered him to go off the teritories of the United States. The one who is gone to *Lance a la Graise* will I am in hopes be secured and the provision, for I have writen to the Spanish commdt. in consequance of it.

This instance of disonisty has allarmed the village to such degree that the nex day the principal inhabitants and the magistrates assembled themselfs and assured me of their fidelity to the United States and beged of me that I would chastise in the severest maner the persons in question; I reassured them on their allarme and told them that I was fully persuaded that the prisoners were not supported by the village and that their conduct could in no way operate to the prejudice of so many good citizens as their was in twon.

Some days ago I recived a message from the Petowatomies who lives on River St. Joseph. They consist of about 200 wariors. They offer to come under the protection of the United States and to be employ'd to make war against the Wabash Indians. Some years ago the Weeyas killed a Petowatomie chief. Ever since which they have been at war. I expect in about a month some of their chiefs to negotiate this business. I shall in the first place promise them the protection of the United States, but with respect to their going to war against the Wabash I shall ammuse them until I recive your direction. If you think propre to employ them under a cloack it may be done and to great advantage, but in case it should take place, I must have it in my power to supply them with ammunition and other necessarys and they must have little presents. In any case it will be advantagious to be friends with them if we should establish a fort on St. Joseph River, which is the place they live at.

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[1] See below.

When Mr. Peters went down to escort the provision I was oblig'd to hire a boat of about 20 tons to transport the troops. This boat was left at Kaskaskias, the owner charging an extravagant price for every day the boat was from him and the imposibility of sending for it before fall, the water in the Wabash being too low to bring her round. Those circumstances have induced me to purchase her to save an unnecessary expence to the United States. I have given 880 pounds of pork and a b. flour which was estimed to be six hundred livers (the price of the boat) and as she is not fit to be keept for public use I shall order her to be sold and transmit you the mony. I suppose there will be some loss on her as she is too small for the Orleans trade, and too large for our small river. I have been offer'd 150 dollars in peltry for her. I have also been oblig'd to pay 200 lbs pork for a pirogue which was hired to send provision to Mr. Peters and which has fallen in to the hands of the enemys, also seven dollars for a nother one that I send down with an express and also fell in the hands of the enemy. There is one or two more pirogues that have been lost but they were hired by the contractor and until I recive your direction respecting the loss of that cargo I shall not give any certificate for any thing.

I hope you will be pleased to approve of such Q. M. and Indians acct. against the United States as may be presented to you. I have used as much oeconomy as possible in both departments. You well know your self that it is impossible when fifty or hundred Indians come to you on a visit or on business for their nation to get clear of them without giving them something, and I think without flatering myself that considering how I am plagued every day with them that the United States will have no reason to complain of my generosity. On the contrary I am of the opinion that I have not been sufficiently liberal, *but you can well judge of the reason.*

About a mounth ago a large party of the Shawnese passed through the village and had with them three prisoners. I have made out to rescue them at the moderate price of little provision. One of the prisoner is the son of one Major Hay in Kentuck (as it is said), the other two are one woman and a girl taken at the same time which is seven years ago.

Pakan, the Indian who I had send to the Miami to know the result of the conseil of *La Roche du Bout,* hearing of the desaster of his ban[2] has return'd before the conseil began. On the 11th September at night two woman and a sucking baby were murdered by the Indians on the other side of the river at Mr. Vigo farme.

The conduct of the magistrates and of the poeple of the twon prohibiting Mr. Brown to pass through their village has so much exasperated those villains that their is no doubt but they would be bad enuff (if it was not for the protection of the troops of this place) to raise a body of men and form an expedition against the village. It has been talked of on Green River.

I will be much oblig'd to you if you will be pleased to inform me how the men who have reinlisted are to be mustered, whether their reinlistment is to be taken from the time they reinlisted or from the time that their first inlistment expired.

The greatest part of the Shawnese nation are gone to the Mississipi and our gent. of the Wabash are continuing their depredation. About 300 of them were some time ago in Kentuck.

Soon as any body arrives from the Falls of the Ohio I shall for the security of the governor and judges forge a letter which I shall publish in twon annoncing that for some particular reasons the governor or judges are not comming until next spring. This newse will be at the Weeya in four or five days and may prevent the Indians of forming a plan to come acros His Excellency (if they should be disposed so to do), for they are knowing to his coming, and their past conduct induces me to believe that they would ketch him if they could put their hands on him.

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[2] Hamtramck probably refers to the attack made by the force commanded by Patrick Brown. See above, Hamtramck to Harmar, August 31, 1788, and note on Brown.

The men that are reinlisted in Capt. Smith company are not able to do duty for the want of shirts and shoes. I have the honor to inclose the inspection return of Capt. Furgeson and a mounthly return of Capt. Smith. The officer of that company are so sick that it is out of their power to attend to duty. As soon as they are better I will forward their inspection return. I also inclose a return of military stores and of the Q. M., also a return of medicines, also is inclosed a duplicate of the return of the provision destroy'd by the Indians at the mouth of the Wabash on the 27th of July last on the back of which is what I have taken from the French men and lodge in the contractor store.[3] I also inclose a duplicate of Lieut. Peters' report of the action he had with the Indians on the 27th July and a duplicate of Mr. St. Mary letter to me conserning a seizure made on his property by a body of Spanish troops on our teretorys.

I can not pass in silance the good appearance and the good ordre of the company book, arms, accoutrements and cloathing of Capt. Furgeson company at the inspection. Neither can I say too much in favor of that exellent officer. His great attention to his duty, and the fatigues he has undergone in the building of the garrison entitles him to your attention.

If you t[h]ought proper to allow me some amunition for the purpose of practicing the artillery and infantry I am well persuaded that it would be of very great service, for the men appears to me to be unacqainted with firing.

The comm't of St. Louis[4] has wrote a letter to the French of this place inviting them to come and settle on the Spanish side and offer them land for nothing. This letter was given to an Indian. I have got it from him for a bot. of rum before any of the poeple saw it.

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[3] These documents have not been found.

[4] Manuel Perez.

If the winter should prove to be so moderate as not to freese the Wabash, I shall be forced to purchase a double team to furnish the garrison with wood, for we will have to go a great way for it.

Agreably to your request I have made my arrengments to not go to New York. Indeed my affairs were so situated that I could not have gone. I will be very much oblige to you if you will be pleased to order a supply of camp kettles.

Will be pleased to present my respects to Mrs. Harmar and inform her that as soon as the pakans are ripe I will send her some. The wallnuts which she was pleased to send me were exellent. I send by Capt. Furgeson few pakans the only ones I could procure. They are from last year. I also send some beans which are not known with you.

Be persuaded, sir, that it is with very great sentiments of respect and esteem that I have the honor to be your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

BRIGADIER GENER. HARMAR

[Enclosure—DS]

POST VINCENNES 13th Sept'r 1788

At a Board of Officers held by order of Maj'r John F. Hamtramck Commandant to enquire how a number of French people now in confinement came by a quantity of provisions found in their possession which was taken by the Indians on the 27th of July last at the Mouth of the Wabash River,[5] also to enquire into every circumstance relative to the whole affair.

Capt'n William Ferguson, President

Lieut. Beatty Lieut. Ford	Members	Lieut. Doyle Ens'n. Pryor

Lewis Leneveu was sworn interpreter to the Board.

The prisoners, viz: John Melbeck, Nicholas Tearer, John

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[5] See above, August 23, for account of this.

Babtist Seton, Joseph Campo, Amable Lardoy, and Lewis Alar, was brought before the Board.

James Fullen, Soldier Capt'n Smith's Company, being sworn says, that he was one of Lieut. Peters's party that was defeated, made his escape & got upon the island opposite the Mouth of Wabash where he staid two days and then went up where they were defeated & found a perougue tied to a tree with some provision in her and some near her. He took a barrell of flour and two pieces of pork which had belonged to that perougue & was afloat and floated it down to the island where he came from. In three days afterwards he saw three Frenchmen coming down the river who hailed him. He answer'd & they came ashore to him. He told them that Lieut. Peters with a party of men was defeated on the Wabash by the Indians & that there was a perougue with provisions tied where it happened. They then went to the Mouth of the Wabash and landed him on the point & themselves proceeded up the Wabash towards the perougue, in a little time returned, left one man with him, the other two went up Ohio some distance & returned with four other people. They then left two men with him, the remainder went up the Wabash and brought down the perougue with the provision to the point, in a little time afterwards they all went on board and proceeded down the Ohio. Three miles below the Mouth of the Wabash they found another perougue run on shore with some provisions, whiskey &c., in her which they got off and took along, floated all night and the next morning landed on an island where we staid three days. During this time the French people devided the provision among themselves and one man took some part down the river with him in a perougue. The third day set out with 2 men in a canoe to come here and after going about 9 miles the men for some reason returned back to the island with him, and after staying some days more with them I set out with Henry Allen and came here by land. *This soldier never told me a [MS illegible] of this affair. I have [him] now in confindment and in irons. All I am sorry for is that I have no law to kill him but he will be in that situation for his 3 years if he stays with me.*

Quest: What quantity of provision did that man take with him down Ohio River.

Ans: Thirteen or fourteen barrells flour and a tierce of pork.

Quest: Did you tell they people that took the perougues that it was publick provision that was in them.

Ans: I told them it was provisions belonging to the troops.

Quest: Was not there some arms & soldiers clothing on board the perougue you found below the Mouth of Wabash on Ohio.

Ans: I saw two rifles, one musket, one reg'l coat, a pair blue woolen overhalls, one shirt, & two blankets on board the boat.

Quest: Do you know what became of these things.

Ans: The two rifles the French people sold, the musket was brought here by Seton, they gave me the coat, overhalls, & one blanket, one blanket and the shirt they kept themselves.

John Shirley, being sworn says that on last Friday evening he was walking in the village about 11 oclock at night with one McKann, and saw a perougue land. They went down to see who they were, & saw a Frenchman in the perougue (which is Campo) who asked what they were loaded with, was answer'd flour, then asked where they had got it. He answer'd from the Indians. Asked him how long he had it. He said upwards of a month. Asked him where he had been with it all this time. He said down the river. Asked him if he was not going to inform the major of it, he said no. Shirley then came immediately up & informed the major the circumstances. The major told him to go back & not suffer anything to be taken off, nor the people to go away. When he returned he found Campo going up the hill with a bag of flour which he made him return to the boat. In a few minutes afterwards he saw two Indians come down near the boat which the

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* The sentences between the asterisks are in Hamtramck's hand.

Frenchmen spoke to & immediately the Indians walked off. The troops came down soon after.

Moses McKann being sworn says that on last Friday evening he was walking in the village with Shirley. He saw a perougue land about 11 oclock at night. They both went down to see who they were. When they came to the shore they found only Campo on board of it and the boat was covered with skins. He asked them where they came from. He answer'd Belle Reiver. Asked him what was his loading. He said flour. If he had any whiskey, said he had none. How did you come by your cargoe. He got it from the savages. Was it the flour taken from the Americans. Said it was. How long was it ago. About a month. Have you acquainted the commanding officer. He seemed to signify in broken English & French that he had not nor did not intend to. They then made all speed to the commanding officer, & when they returned met Campo with a bag of flour on his back which they made him return to the boat and when they got to the boat there were several people more there than when they had left it & more gathering, all of which we took under charge agreeable to the major's directions. Soon after two Indians came down & conversed with the Frenchmen. One of these Indians drew his knife & Shirley who had a cutteau drew it himself and another man drew their knives, and the Indians moved off. In a little time after the guard came down & took charge of the perougues & men.

The prisoners were remanded back to the guard house except Melbeck who was examined as follows—

Quest: How came you by that provision that was found in your possession last night.

Answer: I found it on the Ohio shore below the mouth of this river.

Quest: Did you find it in a perougue.

Ans: Some in a perougue and some on shore.

Quest: What quantity of provision was in the perougue, and was the perougue near the provision that was on shore.

Answ: I cannot tell what quantity there was in the perougue, but it was close by the provision on shore.

Quest: How long is it since you first saw the provision on the Ohio shore.

Answ: About a month since.

Quest: Did you not find some whiskey among the provision and whether was it on shore or in the pearougue.

Answ: We did find whiskey and it was ashore.

Quest: How did you find the flour, was it in casks or bags, or part in each.

Answ: When I first saw the flour it was all in Casks. I hid it & the second time I went down I took bags with me from here to bring up what I had before hid, & any more I might find.

Quest: Was any person with you when you first found the provision and who were they.

Answ: John B. Seton, & Amable Lardoy was with me and no other person.

Quest: Do you know if any of the provisions which you took up or any other being carried down the Ohio.

Ans: No. I was told by a boat coming up the Ohio, that they had met a man in a boat with some provisions going to Lance le Grasse

Quest: What Indians was them that was assisting you last night in unloading the pearougue & where did they join you.

Answ: I did not see the Indians at all as I had walked up to the village, but understand they were Indians just come down the bank and was with the men in the other pearougue.

Quest: Was the pearougue made fast, in what manner, when you found her.

Ans: The pearougue was made fast to a tree.

John B. Seton was brought before the board and examined as follows—

Quest: Was you along with Melbeck when he first found the flour & provision.

Answ: I was.

Quest: What time was it.

Answ: I do not know, but a soldier who we took up on the island opposite the Mouth of Wabash told us it was eight days after the defeat of Lieut. Peters.

Quest: Where did you get the provision.

Answ: At the point where the Wabash empties into the Ohio.

Quest: Did you find any whiskey and where.

Answ: We found one barrell in going down the Ohio River to hide the provision in the saline about 15 miles below the Mouth of Wabash and a half barrell 9 miles below the Mouth of Wabash on the Ohio River as we were coming up.

Quest: Do you know of any more provision being got on the Ohio or Wabash River the time you got this.

Answ: Yes, there were five of us altogether, two took their proportion of the whole, one is gone to the Ozarks on the Mississipi & the other to the Illinois.

Quest: Was the whole five of you together when you first got the provision.

Answ: No, only three of us—we could not get off the pearougue & went and looked for the other two to help us.

Quest: Did you find only one perougue or two.

Answ: We found one pearougue tied to a tree at the Mouth of Wabash and as we were taking her down to the saline we found another pearougue about three miles below the Mouth of Wabash fast in some limbs of a tree overset, and some few barrells of flour under her.

Quest: How much provision did you get altogether.

Answer: The proportion was about seven barrells of flour apiece, the pork was laying in a heap & spoiled with vermin.

Quest: What Indians were they that were seen near the pearougues when you landed last night, & when did they join you.

Answer: I did not see any Indians at all.

Question: Did you bring up any provision the first time you came up Wabash and what quantity.

Answ: Yes, three barrells of pork & four bags flour

Quest: Did you know who the provision belonged to that you got on Wabash and Ohio.

Answ: I did not know whether it did belong to the publick or to individuals.

Quest: How came you to carry off a pearougue with provisions that was made fast, without knowing the owner & who perhaps might be very near.

Answ: It was on the information of Fullen, the soldier, who informed us that they Indians had defeated a party which this provision belonged to and they thought to remove it to a safe place.

Quest: Did Fullen the soldier tell you that the party was a party of troops from this garrison, & the provision was publick provision.

Answ: The soldier told us that they were some Americans had brought it there & that some troops was sent down to bring it up, but did not tell us whether it was publick or private provision.

Quest: After you got the provision here, and was unloading it, was not you convinced of its being public.

Answ: No he supposed it belonged to traders, but after they had unloaded the pearougues they intended to have come & inform the major.

The Board adjourned untill 4 oclock, P. M.

The Board met agreeable to adjournment.

Amable Lardoy, on examination says that Melbeck, Seton & himself was a hunting on a river below the Mouth of the Wabash which empties into the Ohio, called Merry River, that they came down said river in a pearougue and went up Ohio into Racoon Creek which empties nearly opposite the Mouth of Wabash on the other side into Ohio, that they hunted there some time and left it to go down Ohio to the saline to hunt. In passing the island opposite the Mouth of Wabash they found Fullen, a soldier who was with Lieut. Peters when he was defeated on the island, who told them the whole circumstance of the defeat, & that one pearougue lay at the Mouth of Wabash with the provisions, that they went there and found the pearougue so fast a ground that they cou'd not get her off. They then went up Ohio 9 miles & got two Frenchmen who was then hunting to come & help them. They then returned to the pearougue got her off & put all the provision they cou'd find in her, & was going down the Ohio River, about three miles below the Mouth of Wabash found another fast in the limbs of a tree nearly overset with four or five barrells of flour, three barrells of pork, & some whiskey in her. They righted her and found some more provision near her and was proceeding down the river with the two pearougues. About 21 miles below the Mouth of Wabash by Fullen's desire they put him on shore and sent one man with him to conduct him to Post Vincennes. They proceeded on to Merry River & left one of the pearougues loaded with provision, the other pearougue with 14 barrells of flour & one of pork they took a little lower down to a bayough and in three days afterwards one Lafong proceeded with this pearougue to Lanse la Grasse. They remainder of them came back to the other pearougue, took out three barrells of pork and between 3 & 400 wt. of flour, concealed the pearougue with the remainder of the provisions & then came on to this place, where they staid about 8 days, went down and brought up the remainder which arrived last night.

Quest: What Indians was them that was seen near the pearougues last evening & when did they join you.

Answ: I did not see but two, & them had just came down to the landing as we landed, smoking their pipes.

Nicholas Tearer on examination says that he was employed by Melback to go down Wabash and bring up a pearougue with provision, & they went down the Ohio about 21 miles below the Mouth of Wabash where they found the pearougue with twenty five barrells flour in her which they brought on & coming up Ohio they took in the quantity of whiskey (as mentioned before) in two different places & proceeded up to this place with it.

The Board adjourned untill Monday 10 oclock.

The Board met agreeable to adjournment.

Joseph Campo upon examination says that he was employed by Henry Allen to go a hunting with him. When they got on Merry River they found Melbeck, Lafon, Seton, & Lardoy, there a hunting, likewise, & they all hunted together for some time & from there went up to Racoon Creek to hunt. Some time after Melbeck, Seton, & Lardoy left them and said they wou'd go home as their amunition was out; the same evening Melbeck & Seton came back and informed them of the pearougue of provisions the found and desired them to come to their assistance in getting the pearougue off as she was aground. They all went and when they came to the Mouth of the Wabash they left him on the point with Fullen the soldier, & they remainder proceeded up Wabash 1 1/2 miles and brought down the pearougue to the Mouth of the Wabash with the provision consisting of 25 barrells flour. They then proceeded all down the River Ohio together & about four miles from the Mouth of Wabash they found the other pearougue fast in the limbs of a tree full of water. They found in the boat three barrells of pork, one barrell of whiskey, 14 or 15 barrells of flour, one barrell of salt, two rifles, and one musket, that lower down they found one barrell floating which they supposed had came out of the pearougue & took them both down to Merry River where Lafong, with the last pearougue they had taken, loaded with 12 barrells of flour, 1 barrell of pork, about half a barrell salt, 3 or 4 galls. whiskey, proceeded to Lanse le Grasse. The other pearougue as he understood was removed down the river about four & half miles where she was hid in a bayough with the remainder of the provision from Merry River. The soldier Fullen & Allen left them to go to this place. When the boat was hid they proceeded in a small pearougue with four barrells of pork about 400 wt. of flour & arrived with it in this place. A few days afterwards he went with Melbeck & the others to bring up the pearougue with the provisions and arrived here last night. On coming up the Ohio the last time they found a barrell with whiskey in it on the Ohio shore and brought it along.

Quest: What Indians were them that was on the bank near your pearougues when you landed last night & were they with you before.

Answ: They were Indians that had just come down from the village when we landed a smoking. I never saw them before nor do not know who they were.

Quest: Was any loading taken out of the boats into the villiage previous to the troops arriving.

Answ: I was taking one bag of flour out myself but was detected by the soldiers and it was taken away from me, but saw four bags & believe five of flour carried out, two by Seton, one by Lardoy, & one by Alar certain.

The Board adjourned untill 4 oclock P. M.

The Board met agreeable to adjournment.

As it appeared from Campo's examination and other circumstances that Lewis Alar was not down the river with them and had only joined them when they arrived at the villiage & was assisting them in unloading the pearougues, he was released by order of Major Hamtramck on his returning what flour he had taken.

Robert McKoy being sworn says that he was at Lance le Grasse and saw there one Lafong endeavouring to sell provision, & on enquiring where he got it was answer'd that him (Lafong) and some others had found a pearougue with provision at a small island in & near the mouth of Wabash, that after taking it some distance down the Ohio they got to drinking & concluded to divide the provision, that his share was 14 or 15 barrells of flour and a tierce of pork which he had brought to this place to dispose of & that he (McKoy) did purchase 15 or 16 bls pork from him. He understood from Lafong that the other party intended taking the remainder of the provision to Post Vincennes, but he concluded it not safe to go there as the provision he supposed wou'd be taken from them.

Quest: Did Lafong tell you any thing about the defeat of a party of men on the Wabash, or say who he thought the provision had belonged to.

Answ: No.

Question to Campo: What was the reason of your dividing the provision previous to your bringing it here.

Answer: Lafong & Allen who was a seperate party to the three first that found it insisting upon haveing their share on the Ohio River, that they might take it to Mississipi, for if they brought it here, they were afraid it wou'd be taken from them.

Quest: When you divided the provision had you any share in it.

Ans: No. I was a hired man by Allen & was only to be paid by him.

The Board adjourned untill Wednesday the 17th Sept. 88

The Board met agreeable to adjournments and referr'd the foregoing proceedings to Major John F. Hamtramck commandant.

W Ferguson Capt. & Pres't.

[Addressed:] John F. Hamtramck Major Comd't Post Vincennes

[Endorsed:] Examination of the Canadians respecting the provision

Harmar to Hamtramck, October 13, 1788

[Letterbook Copy]

Fort Harmar October 13th, 1788

Dear Major, My last letter to you was dated the 7th August, and forwarded from hence by Lieutenant Ford, since which I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 18th June, the 14th July, and the 12th August. The deposition relative to the Spaniards seizing American property on the east side of the Mississippi, and also the one concerning the murder of a man and a child at Sullivan's Station has been received.[1]

I have signed Mr. Vigo's accounts, and as I am sensible he has been of real service to your garrison, have recommended him warmly to the War Office, as a friend to the United States. I have no doubt but his accounts will be immediately settled.

You will act properly in seizing and confining the Gross Tete, or any other villains who were accessary to the murder committed at Sullivan's Station.

I observe by your letter of the 12th August the severe stroke which the party under Lieut. Peter's has received. The intelligence has been transmitted to the War Office. The new government I hope will soon operate, and expect in the course of the next year we shall not tamely suffer the subjects of the United States to be murdered by these perfidious savages; a proper force must certainly be raised to chastize them.

I hope Lieutenant Peter's safely arrived at the Post from Kaskaskias, with the remainder of his party. I shall send Lieut. Kersey's detachment consisting of 48 men down to Major Wyllys[2] as soon as I find matters wear a favorable aspect in this quarter. At present the appearance is dull indeed, no treaty has as yet taken place, neither do I believe one will.[3] The savages are in my opinion hatching a great deal of mischief. I have pressed the contractors for provisions for your Post, and Mr. Elliot informs me that it shall be plentifully supplied. Major Wyllys and you must settle the best mode of escorting the provisions. It appears to me most eligible, that he should furnish the escorts; they could return by land from the Post to the Falls. I have written to him to reinforce you.[4] It is out of my power from present circumstances to relieve Captain Ferguson's company with artillery men; they must therefore remain until further orders.

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[1] For mention of the first see Hamtramck to Harmar, July 14, 1788, and for the second see above, pp. 92-94.

[2] Commanding at Fort Steuben at the Falls of the Ohio.

[3] St. Clair wrote Secretary at War Knox on September 14 that war with the western tribes seemed inevitable and that a treaty of peace was unlikely. Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 89.

The Governor will take with him suitable presents for Indians, and upon his arrival you may expect some money for expresses, and other contingent purposes. I am sorry it is out of my power at present to furnish you with the two boats you wish for. I have detached a Captain's Command with Capt. Hutchins, the geographer, for his protection to the mouth of the Scioto, in order to survey the exterior lines of Messrs. Cutler & Sarjent's purchase,[5] which weakens this garrison considerably, at the present moment more especially.

Let your fort be named *Fort Knox*.[6]

I shall expect to hear from you by every opportunity. Be pleased to present my compliments to all your officers.

I am, dear major, with great esteem & regard your most h'ble serv't,

Jos. Harmar
Lt. Col. Com't 1st U. S. Reg't.

Major Hamtramck Commanding Officer at Post Vincennes

P. S. Mrs. Harmar sends you her compliments.

[Marginal note:] forwarded by Mitchell in a Kentuck boat.

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[4] On November 1, Wyllys wrote to Harmar that Hamtramck had written to him for a reinforcement—sixty or seventy men. "I have but fifty men fit for duty," wrote Wyllys, "including those just arrived with Capt. Beatty—and am now obliged to apply to Col. Bullett, the Lieutenant of the neighbouring county in Kentucky for a Company of horse, that I may be able to make an escort strong enough to proceed to the Post with a drove of cattle—it will be difficult for me to send another escort by water, which will soon be necessary. . . ." Harmar Papers. The use of the Kentucky mounted militia had repercussions, as evidenced below. See Armstrong to Harmar, December 29.

[5] Manasseh Cutler and Winthrop Sargent, agents of the Ohio Company of Associates. See above, p. 88n.

[6] On November 3, Harmar sent to Secretary at War Knox a ground plan of the garrison Hamtramck had constructed at Post Vincennes, and told him that it had been honored with his name. On December 22 Knox replied thanking Harmar for the compliment thus paid him. Harmar Papers.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, November 28, 1788

[ALS]

FORT KNOX AT POST VINCENNES
Nov. 28th 1788

DEAR GENERAL I had the honor of your letter of the 13th of Octobre, and altho' I have nothing of consequence to inform you of, this will at least let you know that nothing has happened since my last, which was by Capt. Furgeson.

The hostile disposition of the Indians appears to me to be in a great measure relased in this quarter, but for all that I do not flater my self that they will be at perfect peace with us, for vengeance is their darling passion, and they for ever will have some old or new grudge to satisfy. They have no doubt during last war and perhaps since, lost some of their relation in some of their excursion. Those lives must be paid for, as no length of time ever closes their wounds, let them be ever so slight, and altho' the nations should determine to be at perfect peace with us, their yong warriors in my opinion will alwais in a secret maner commit depredation unless prevented by a good chastisement.

The Peankichas who were in the village have gone to make a setlement near Kaskaskias in consequence of Major Brown expedition. They are joined by the greatest part of the Vermillion Indians and some other nation. The two woman and the child that were killed on the other side of the river at Mr. Vigo farm were dispatched by two Indians of the village, who had some of their near relation killed by Major Brown.

I am fear Mr. Will'm,[1] the contractor, will desapoint you respecting his attention to the supplys at this place for he has not send any worth mentioning. We are and have been for a long time without flour, except a dayly supply which the commissary has made out to proccure in the village. But that resource is almost exosted.

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[1] Eli Williams of Elliott & Williams, contractors.

The draught I made on him for the payment of the provision which I had been obliged to seize for the troops belonging to Ohara and Company, he has refused to pay, saying that the provision had been seized for the public and not for him. To be sure I seized the provision for the public, for at that time I did not know that any new contract had taken place for this post and I appointed a commissary which was to continue in office until I recived supplys from the new contractor. This man was not only an isuing commissary but also furnished me with flour which article was difficient in store. Some time in August one Mr. Smith[2] came and demanded to be commissary for Mr. William & Co. I asked him if he had any supply from the new contractor or whether he had any expectation to get any in the village? He told me not. I then observed to him that the provision which were dayly deliver'd to the troops I had seized and was accountable to Ohara for it, that I had appointed a man as commissary who was also to furnish me with flour and which he had done and that I could not accept of him as a commissary since he had no supply, but that the moment he would have some he should enter in to office. From these circumstances the contractor refused to adobt [?] the provision which I think is a chicanery of a lawyer, for certenly I could not do without provision, and in my opinion if he was under obligation to supply me at the time a [I] made the seizure which was in July, I think the public will oblige him to pay for the provision, particularly as their was no more sized than what was nearly issued before he had any other supply at the place. But I believe that his refusing is only to procrastinate the payment which comes to a good deal. I am also informed that he refuses to pay for it, because they seizure bore date of the first of July, but I can proove that it was about the twenty of that month when I made it, for before that time I seized provision from day to day, so as to not injure the new contractor. But the seizure together with the receipts were antidated for form sake, and beside Major Finly inform'd his commissary that Ohara contract finished in June. Thus originated the mistake, Finly not knowing that his contract included the first of July and his refusing to take the provision. He refuses of consequence to pay the commissary I appointed.[3]

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[2] Anthony Smyth.

I leave this affair intirely into your hands, fully persuaded that you will see it arrenged for the best and have me secured, for Ohara knows no other than me who has taken their provision and from whom they expect payment.

I have the honor to inclose you a return of the provision on hand by which you will see our supplys.[4]

I am told that by a certain resolution of Congress[5] the officers have an opportunity to get their military rights of land. If you have such resolution I will be oblige to you if you will be pleased to send it to me. You well know the difficulties of the officers of your regiment who are confind to garison to attend to this business, not having time to travell and look for a spot that would suit them, and if an officer should employ an agent the expencess would over ballance the profit. I think that Congress would have no great objection to give power to Governor St. Claire to grand the officers of

[3] Finley wrote to his employer O'Hara on November 11 that when he presented to Elliott & Williams, the new contractors, the bill for the provisions seized by Hamtramck, they would not agree to pay, saying that when their commissary, Smyth, went to Fort Knox "Major Hamtramck refused delivering him the provisions and said that he did not know that Mr. Williams had any provisions there, that what provisions was there belonged to the public . . . and when I came away gave me a certificate & order for the contractors [Elliott & Williams] to pay me the price allowed by the board of Treasury to you for the specific articles of provision which he had taken." Harmar Papers.

[4] See below.

[5] Perhaps Hamtramck has reference to a section of the supplement to the Land Ordinance of 1785 passed July 9, 1788, which ordained "That the Secretary at War issue warrants for bounties of land to the several officers and soldiers of the late continental Army who may be entitled to such bounties or to their respective assigns or legal representatives, certifying therein the rank or station of each officer, and the line, regiment corps and company in which the officer or soldier served." Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers,* II, 122.

your regiment their rights where they would shuse to have it. These reasons might be offered their continuel confindment in garrison preventing them to look out for a spot as I have observ'd before.

2d. As a gratification for the services the regiment has done, which is not small, and as a compensation for having been keept of our mony so long which woul[d] be no more than its interest. The advantage of such resolve would be of very great consequence to the officers. I know of mines and of salt licks sufficient to serve a number of us. I send you some copper which is to be found in planty on a certain tract of land in this country. I also send you some lead which is found in the country of the Illinois.

Please to present my respect to Mrs. Harmar and inform her that I will send her some nuts by the first opportunity.

I am dear general with very great respect and estime your most obedient and humble servent

J. F. Hamtramck

P. S. I had agreably to your direction demanded of Major Wyllys 70 men which he inform me could not be well send, but assured me that the Governor will bring some with him. *That will do as well.*

[Endorsed:] Major Hamtramck from Post Vincennes November 28th 1788 Answered [October] 26th [25] 1789

[Enclosure—ADS]

Stores on hand this 25th of Novem'r 1788
Thirty one beaves wt. about 10050
A sufficiency of candles
I have hitherto procur'd flour in the villiage since our store was exhausted, and have reason to expect a supply of that article and whiskey from the Falls in about twenty days.

John Mills Commiss'y

Fort Knox, at Post Vincennes

Lieut. John Armstrong to Harmar, December 29, 1788

[ALS]

Garrison Rapids of the Ohio
29th December 1788

Dear Sir By Captain Beatty I informed you of an injury done me by being ordered to march to Post Vincennes under the command of a militia officer on state affairs, with my aprehentions in case we met with an enimy on the way, to which I have received no answers.[1] This detachment returned on the 4th instant. And after relating to you the order of march &c I have you to judge of the justness of my apprehensions and my feelings on the occasions. We marched from Clarksville with the cattle on the 11th ultimo and arrived at Post Vincennes on the 22d. The detachment seldom started in the morning before nine o'clock when the commanding officer proceeded in front with the cavalry, and I saw no more of him or his detachment untill I come to his camp at night. They once fired twelve guns at buffalo and were so far in my front that I did not hear a single gun, and in another instance I halted near four hours for one of the soldiers who had strayed from the party and mistook his way—during this time I neither saw or heard from the commanding officer. Accustomed to some regularity being observed on a march and a strict obedience to orders I marched the two first days without halting to refresh my party until night, hoping every moment to come up with the party in front. I was at last obliged to inform my commandant that a halt for about 15 minutes in the middle of the day was necessary. The inconveniences experienced by the federal troops was not felt by the militia as the former were encumbered with the pack horses & cattle. The latter could ride some distance halt and refresh before the federal troops came up. Having no person with me acquainted with the waters &c. I was in one instance obliged following our leader who was some miles in front to ford a creek where it took the men to the middle and was extreme cold, when as I learnt afterward by the guide we might have crossed without weting our feet by leaving the trace a few hundred yards. To a party of men with several days' provision on their backs and in cold weather, this was a matter of much consequence. We were I think 29 days from this garrison, and if I have any judgment the march might have been performed in about thirteen days. . . .

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[1] On November 6, Armstrong wrote to Harmar of the humiliation he suffered from having to serve on an assignment under the command of a militia officer and his fears for the success of the expedition. Harmar Papers.

. . . .

JOHN ARMSTRONG

P. S. I returned from Post Vincennes a different rout from that I took in going there and from the observations I made by attention to my compass & watch with the difference of latitude between this place and the post conceive the distance not to exceed sixty or seventy miles. In this opinion I am not alone. It would certainly be a great advantage to the public if a road could be blazed not exceeding this distance and at the same time avoid Silver Creek knobs and some other hills which may be done by crossing Silver Creek about six miles west of this garrison, and crossing Blue River above the barrens, cross the present blazed way near the lick, & strike White River below the Forks where the land is high on both sides and not subject to overflow. Here we crossed in returning from the Post. I presume Major Wyllys has wrote you on this subject—please to make my respects to Mrs. Harmar.

J. A.

GENERAL HARMAR

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brigadier General Harmar Commandant on the Ohio

[Endorsed:] Lieutenant John Armstrong from the Rapids of the Ohio December 29th 1788

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, January 19, 1789

[ALS]

FORT KNOX AT POSTE VINCENNES
Jan'y 19 1789

DEAR GENERAL You will no doubt be surprised when I inform you that the provision for this place did not left the Falls of the Ohio til the 16 Decemb. 88, and the consequence has been that the Kentuck boat in which was the provision together with some pirogues were cast a way by the ice on the Ohio; but fortunately every thing was landed in time on an iland. The boats that went from here to meet the Kentuck boats at the mouth of the Wabash went up the Ohio and after having loaded maid for this place but the season was then too much advenced and they are now 72 miles down the River Wabash frozen. I am in hopes that few days of fine weather will bring them up.

I must say that it is not my opinion that the contractor intents to furnish us with every parts of ration, particularly the liquour, of which article we have had but a small supply and I am inform'd that their is not any coming. For 13 months we have had two of soap and candels.

I am so much apprehensive that they will leave us in the lurch that I should like to have 18 months' provision early in the spring if you think propre to order it.

It is certain that I do not exaggerate when I say that ever since I have commanded at Post Vincennes we have drawn from the village near a third part of the flour that has ben consumed. The wounded who were at Kaskaskias exepted two that have deserted and one who is still there have returned.

I had postponed the muster of the troops until I could be inform'd whether the men who had reinlisted were to be muster'd from the date of their inlistments or from the period that their time expired in their former companys, but yong Mr. Wells who leaves about Coxes Fort now going up the river has induced me to make the muster which I have the honor to inclose, also the inspection of the troops. The others (of military stores) and Q. M. we have not time to make but will send them by the next opportunity.

The reason why Major Wyllys has not send me troops was that he expected His Excellency with some that would have come with him to this place. Rather did I pressed him much on account of my supplys, for it is with great difficulties that we can leave, but I have writen him that as Capt. Furgeson men's time would began to expire in March, I should expect he would send me some from his garrison if the governor was not at the Falls in that month.

Since the majors are to do the duty of inspector, I will be very much oblige to you to send me a large book to keep copies of inspection and muster.

I have inlisted a randger for one year but I know not how to give him pay or cloathing. The last I had, had neither.

Congress have so long neglected the Kaskaskias that it is almost deserted for the want of goverment. Their court of justice have desolved themself.[1]

The Petowatomies have send me word that they will be with me in the spring (but I begin to doub[t] it). I also inclose the doctor report of the wounded. I have also examined them myself and recomend them to a pension if it could be obtained.

I have the honor to be sir with every sentiments of respect and estime your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. Hamtramck

Will you be pleased to present my respects to Mrs. Harmar and tel her that she shall have pekans by the first opportunity.

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[1] The village of Kaskaskia was in sad plight. The salutary effects of Harmar's visit were short-lived. The dissolution of the court was due in part to the decrease in the number of French inhabitants, many of whose leaders had gone across the Mississippi to the Spanish shore. For a picture of the declining Kaskaskia see Clarence W. Alvord, *The Illinois Country 1673-1818* (Springfield, 1920), p. 372; and Tardiveau's memorial to Congress, February 28, 1788, in Alvord (ed.), *Kaskaskia Records*, pp. 454-62, particularly pp. 458-59. See also below, pp. 158-59n, 190-91, 197-204.

If the governor is coming in the spring I would recommand him the month of March on account of the Indians.

[Endorsed:] Major Hamtramck from Fort Knox at Post Vincennes Janu'y 19th 1789 Answered 1789

[Second endorsement:] Report of the wounded.

[Enclosure—ALS]

Fort Knox Jany 1st 1789

Sir Agreeably to your orders I have examined the men who were wounded at the mouth of the Wabash on the 27th July 1788[2] and beg leave to report as follows

Serg't Sullivan of Capt. Ferguson's Comp'y wounded in the right arm, one of the bones fractured, and he has in a great measure lost the use of two fingers.

John Emley of Capt. Ferguson's Company, wounded in the shoulder which has considerably injured the motion of his right arm.

Aaron Guilderman of Capt. Smith's Company wounded in the arm, has nearly lost the use of two fingers, and also by a cut he received at Fort McIntosh in the year 1785 is rendered very lame & the leg and thigh considerably decayed.

I am sir your obed't serv't

John Elliot S. M.
1st U. S. Regt.

Major Hamtramck

William Knox to Harmar, January 31, 1789

[ALS]

War Office January 31st 1789

Sir, The Secretary at War being confined to his bed with a severe rheumatic fever and unable to write I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 15th ultimo with its enclosures.

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[2] When the Indians attacked the detachment commanded by Lieut. Peters near the mouth of the Wabash. See above, pp. 104-5, 109-10.

Lieut. Beatty in company with Captain Ferguson arrived in this city on the 28th instant. I hope the Secretary at War will be so much better in a few days as to attend to the business of Mr. Beatty.

Mr. Vigo's account[1] has again been brought to this office and put into the hands of the accountant but he has declined passing it for reasons which he has assigned in a statement transmitted by him to the Board of Treasury of which the enclosed is a copy—an extract of your letter of the 7th September last was produced to the Board of Treasury, but they assured me the account could not be acted upon in its present form. You will therefore be pleased to transmit to Mr. Vigo and Major Hamtramck the statements of the accountant in order that the account may be conformed to it, after which there can be no obstacle in the way of its being settled.[2] Enclosed you will receive a copy of the Sec'ry at War's last letter to you, and also of Mr. Vigo's account.

I am sir with great respect your most obedient servant,

WM. KNOX

BRIG'R GEN'L JOSIAH HARMAR

[Addressed:] Brigadier General Josiah Harmar Fort Harmar Ohio To the care of Lieut. Ernest,[3] Dr. Officer commanding at Fort Pitt

[Endorsed:] The honorable Major General Knox, duplicate of the 19th January & from Mr. William Knox the 31st January with Mr. Vigo's account and the report of the accountant. Answered May 8th, 1789.

[Enclosure-Copy]

(Copy)

ACCOUNTANTS OFFICE
NEW YORK January 31st 1789

SIR, I have examined an account, Francis Vigo against the United States, and find,

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[1] See above, p. 92.

[2] On July 29, 1789, Hamtramck wrote to Harmar that Vigo's account would be made against the late contractor, which was O'Hara. See below, p. 179.

[3] Lieut. Matthew Ernest, of New York.

That he charges for rent of two houses said to have been occupied as hospitals; for Indian corn, and other articles certified by Major Hamtramck to have been supplied to the troops at Post Vincents agreeably to account herewith, dated 1st June 1788, amounting to £163.2.6 Pennsylvania currency, equal to four hundred and thirty-five dollars....Dollars 435.

Note—As there was a contract existing for the supply of the troops on the western frontier, including Post St. Vincents with provisions, and also an agreement with the Secretary at War for such articles and service in the quarter master's department as might be necessary I am of opinion the above account in the first instance lays more properly against the late contractor, and when exhibited by him against the United States, supported by the necessary vouchers, may be admitted to his credit.

Exclusive of the above the account appears deficient for the following reasons—Viz:

The time for which rent is charged is not expressed. It appears by the extract from Colonel Harmar's letter herewith produced as a voucher in support of the above account, that Mr. Vigo "supplied Major Hamtramck all last winter with provisions" whereas there is not any charge for provisions except 136 bushels corn.

It is true Mr. Vigo charges £60.0. "paid ten men fetching provisions from the mouth of Wabash."

Quere—What provisions were they? The presumption is, they were the contractor's provisions, for which he is allowed extra prices at the above mentioned post on account of transportation. Upon the whole I am of opinion, that it would be not only informal, but improper to admit the foregoing account in its present state. The propriety of which is submitted.

(Signed) JOHN WOODSIDE clk of acc'ts

To JOSEPH HARDY Esqr. Accountant.

Approved
(Signed) J. HARDY Accpt't

[Endorsed:] Report from the accountant's office, on the account of Mr. Vigo against the United States. January 31st 1789. (Copy.)

Harmar to Hamtramck, February 15, 1789

[ALS]

Fort Harmar February 15th 1789

Dear Major, I had the pleasure of addressing you last on the 13th October; the letter was forwarded by Mitchell (one of Captain Ashton's company) on a Kentuck boat, since which I have to acknowledge the receipt of your two letters dated the 31st August, and the 13th October with their several enclosures. I observe the insolent conduct of a certain Patrick Brown, who under the style of a major came with a party of Kentuckyans and murdered nine friendly Indians of Demoiselle's and Packan's bands in the vicinity of Post Vincennes. This is really setting the sovereign authority of the United States at defiance. I wish you had been strong enough and had it in your power not only to have recovered the horses which he stole, but also to have severely chastized him and his party. The fellow in my opinion deserves to be hanged. The extract of your letter relative to the whole of this transaction has been forwarded by me to the Secretary at War, but I have not yet received an answer thereto.

I now send you the whole of Captain Bradford's company, total sixty six, in order to relieve Ferguson's, whose times principally expire next month. You will please to direct them to embark (under the command of Lieutenant Ford) on board Bradshaw's boat, and to repair to this post as soon as possible. I would have you previously to use every means in your power to re-enlist them from Smith's company, but if you cannot succeed, it is very likely that when they arrive here, the chief part of them will reengage for Ferguson.

Lieut. Peters's report of his unfortunate action on the Wabash, as also the return of the provisions lost at the Mouth of the Wabash have been transmitted to the War Office. I cannot see what great expences the contractors were at in the transportation of this provisions. It appears to me that Lieutenant Peters should give a certificate that the provisions did arrive at the Mouth of the Wabash agreeably to the original invoice, as I take it for granted he examined the whole before it was embarked on board the perrogues. Then the quantity which he consumed at Kaskaskias, and what was saved from the cargo, together with the 4010 lbs flour recovered from some of the inhabitants, is to be deducted. The balance consequently will be the quantity captured by the savages, which should be certified, and countersigned by yourself.

In the case of O'Hara & Co'y's provisions, which you were obliged to buy upon promising the same price for it, which they had during their contract, it will be hard upon the new contractors to pay for it at that rate. I believe they will agree to do it, but the best method which occurs to me would be for O'Hara to receive the abstracts, and be paid for it at the old contract price, or else for you to give a particular certificate to the present contractors specifying the absolute necessity you were under to make the purchase, for which probably the Board of Treasury would make them some allowance.[1]

It is my opinion that as Messrs. O'Hara & Co'y had the contract in March last, they should certainly (instead of the public) pay the expences of the ten men whom you hired for sixteen days at a dollar pr day to bring up provisions from the Mouth of the Wabash. The abstracts for the months of April & May, which you have enclosed to me, shall be delivered to them, as I find that Mr. Vigo has been perfectly satisfied as to the discharge of the debt which you contracted with him for.

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[1] On February 25, 1789, Harmar wrote David Duncan, associate of O'Hara, "If Messrs. Elliot & Co'y will not pay you for it [the provisions seized by Hamtramck] at the old contract price, certainly the public must allow you for it at that rate, as Major Hamtramck would not have given orders for seizing it but for the unavoidable necessity." Harmar Papers.

The Grand Treaty was finally concluded on the 11th ult. and the articles signed by twenty seven of their chiefs.[2] The nations assembled here were the Wyondots, Delawares, Chippeways, Ottawas, Potowatemies, Munsies & Sacs, and part of the Six Nations—total near 600. Six hostages are left with me until the white prisoners are brought in and delivered up to me. You will observe that none of the western Indians attended it. My opinion of the effects of the treaty is, that it will have this good tendency at least, to divide the savages in their councils, and to prevent the General Confederacy taking place, which Brandt was so anxious to establish.[3] The Governor left Fort Pitt on the 10th instant for the eastward. He informed me that he expected to be with me again in April or May. I think you need not expect to see him at Post

[2] Actually two treaties were concluded at this time, one with the Wyandots, Delawares, Ottawa, Chippewa, Potawatomi, and Sauk, and another with the Six Nations. The reason for two treaties being made was due, according to St. Clair, to jealousy between the Six Nations and the western tribes. Kappler (ed.), *Laws and Treaties,* II, 20-23, 23-25; Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 113. The date attached to the printed treaties is January 9. The treaties confirmed the boundary lines between the Indian lands and the United States as previously set down by the treaties of Fort Stanwix, 1784, and Fort McIntosh, 1785.

[3] Neither Harmar's nor St. Clair's views were very optimistic. The Governor wrote Secretary at War Knox, January 18, "One good consequence I certainly expect from the meeting, to-wit: that their confederacy is broken, and that Brant (see above, p. 58n) has lost his influence; notwithstanding, it is more than probable that he may be able to incite the Shawanese, and some of the others whom he prevented from coming forward, to mischief, and that the stroke will fall upon Kentucky. This is the opinion of the most sensible among them, with whom I have conversed upon the subject. Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 109.

On May 2, 1789, when forwarding the treaties to the President, St. Clair wrote: "There are, however, several nations on the Wabash, and the rivers which empty themselves into it, that are ill disposed, and from whom there is reason to expect that a part of the frontier of Virginia and the settlement forming on the Miami, will meet annoyance; indeed, that they have not been disturbed during the winter was not expected either by me or the chiefs of the nations who met me at Fort Harmar." *Ibid.,* II, 112. Time was to prove St. Clair right. The Miami and Wabash tribes had remained aloof from the negotiations and they would prove troublesome in the future.

Vincennes before the latter end of June, or beginning of July next.

You inform me that from a number of circumstances, you have reason to believe that the Indians who defeated our boats at the Mouth of the Wabash were the Kickapoos who live near the Illinois River, and are in number about three hundred. It would be well to have this matter perfectly ascertained. I am in hopes that at some future period we may have it in our power to take ample revenge for the injury committed by them.

It is more than probable from the examination of the Canadians respecting the loss of the provisions at the Mouth of the Wabash, that this Melbeck and the other fellows whom you had under guard, were privy to the designs of the Indians, and concerned with them in the attack upon Lieutenant Peters and his party; but even if they were not, they still acted a most base and dishonest part in taking the provisions, and never informing you of the circumstances. It is a pity there are no laws to hang such villains. Fullen the soldier appears to be as great a rascal as any of the inhabitants you had in custody.

I observe the message you received from the Potowatomies who live on the River St. Joseph, offering to come under the protection of the United States and at the same time to be employed in making war against the Wabash Indians. It is the height of good policy to afford them secretly every posible encouragement. I would have you to preserve the greatest friendship with the Potowawtomies, and encourage them (under the rose) all in your power to persist in their laudable intentions.

The boat of 20 tons, which you were obliged to hire to transport the troops when Lieut. Peters went down to escort the provisions, you inform me was left at Kaskaskias. As the owner charged an extravagant price for every day the boat was absent, you acted properly in purchasing her out and out. But as she is too small for the Orleans trade, and too large for the small rivers, you will do right in disposing of her. You need not transmit me the money, as you mention you intend to do, but only let me know what price you have sold her for, and keep the money in your own hands for contingent expences. The sum you are to be answerable for.

I am really very sorry that it is out of my power to send you a proper sum for necessary expences. I am sensible it is for the public interest to take notice of the Indians who come to you on public business, but you well know the cause. The poverty of the treasury prevents me. I am certain you will be as economical as possible in your accounts, both in the quarter master's line, and in the Indian Department. By Captain Bradford I sent you five doubloons amounting to seventy five dollars. Give my compliments to Mr. Vigo, and tell him that I have paid the £8 Pennsylvania currency which he was indebted to Black Charles at Pittsburg. I now enclose you an order on him for the said sum, which when received with the five doubloons will make ninety six & 1/3 dollars.

By the return of Lieut. Ford you will please to transmit me duplicate receipts for the same as contingent money, which you will account for either with me or the public.

You wish to know how the men that have been re-enlisted are to be mustered. Their new enlistment is to be dated from the expiration of their old one, which will make the regular six years' service. Captain Bradford will deliver you a box of clothing for the men of Captain Smith's company who are re-engaged. I have directed Pratt[4] who acts as clothier in the absence of Beatty to transmit you the invoice.

Mr. St. Marie's letter to you (which you enclosed to me) concerning a seizure made on his property by a body of Spanish troops in the territory of the United States, has been transmitted to the War Office, but no answer has as yet been received upon that subject.[5]

I am well pleased to hear of the good order & appearance of Captain Ferguson's company at the inspection. He is certainly an excellent officer, and must have been very serviceable indeed in building the garrison. I flatter myself that you will be pleased with Captain Bradford's company. The attention which he has always paid to it, entitles him to commendation. Bradford takes with him a barrel of damaged powder which will answer the purpose for practicing the artillery & infantry. I have given him directions to consult with Major Wyllys in order that the stores &c. which Major Doughty long since sent down to the Rapids of the Ohio, may be transported to Post Vincennes.

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[4] Lieut. John Pratt, of Connecticut

[5] See above, pp. 110-13.

Ensign Prior has signified through Lieut. Beatty that it is his wish to have three months' absence upon business to the Great Kanhawa. If you should judge it proper, be pleased to deliver him the enclosed furlough for that purpose.

Beatty's prospects respecting pay are pretty flattering. I have some hopes that he will be able to obtain 20,000 dollars for the regiment, which sum is now in the Maryland treasury. Nothing is in our way but the Civil List, which I expect General Knox will be able to get the preference of; however we must not be too sanguine in our hopes, as he may be disappointed in receiving it.

You will please to be very particular in your musters four times each year & transmit the rolls by the safest and most expeditious conveyance to Beatty. From the Rapids through the wilderness is the shortest route. These frequent musters will serve to refresh the memory of government, and to let them know that they have a regiment upon the frontiers.

Mrs. Harmar desires her best respects may be offered to you. The pachan nuts were exceeding fine; if you can make it convenient to send her some more by Lieut. Ford, she will be further obliged to you. When he arrives here, I shall expect a full account of all your proceedings.

With compliments to all the officers I am, Dear Major, with very great respect and esteem your h'ble serv't,

Jos. Harmar
Lt. Col. Com't 1st U. S. Reg't.

MAJOR HAMTRAMCK Commanding Officer at Fort Knox Post Vincennes

[Marginal note:] favored pr Captain Bradford

HARMAR TO HAMTRAMCK, March 24, 1789

[Letterbook Copy]

FORT HARMAR March 24th 1789

DEAR MAJOR, I wrote you fully on the 15th ult. by Captain Bradford; since which I have received dispatches from the War Office relative to the payment of Mr. Vigo's account. A duplicate of Mr. William Knox's letter upon that subject, together with a copy of Mr. Vigo's account, and also a copy of the report from the Accountant's Office upon it, I now enclose to you, and am really sorry to find that Mr. Vigo is likely to meet with so many obstacles in the settlement of it.[1]

You will observe by the report of the accountant, that he is of opinion the account lays more properly against the late contractors. Be pleased to present my compliments to Mr. Vigo and make him acquainted with the whole of the circumstances.

Enclosed you will receive two letters from the War Office. I am in anxious expectation to learn how the federal government comes on. I believe there is no manner of doubt but that General Washington will be president, & Mr. John Adams vice president.

I am, Dear Major, with very great esteem & regard your h'ble serv't,

JOS. HARMAR
Lt. Col. Com't 1st U. S. Reg't.

MAJOR JOHN F. HAMTRAMCK Commanding Officer at Fort Knox at Post Vincennes

[Marginal note:] This letter I believe was forwarded to the Rapids of the Ohio by John McKinsey

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[1] See above, pp. 92, 148-50.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, March 28, 1789

[ALS]

FORT KNOX AT POST VINCENNES
February [March] 28th 1789[1]

DEAR GENERAL Capt. Bradford arrived at Fort Knox on the 26 with his company in perfect good ordre, and without any accidents. Capt. Bradford delivered me your letter of the 15 of February. The last I had the honor to write you was in January, since which nothing of consequence has happened.

The provision which was frozen in the Wabash is arrived, that is what was left. I am very glad that the grand treaty was concluded without accidents, for I have been inform'd this winter by some Indians that the nations had direction from the English to not agree to any thing unless the north side of the Ohio was made their bondaries, and that if it was refused, to compel us by immediatly attacking our garrisons and settlements. A nother treaty is called by the English at *La Roche Dubout* in the spring (this information I do not give for certain).

I am oblige to you for your advice respecting the provision I have taken of Ohara. I will propose to Finly who is acting for Ohara at the Falls of the Ohio to accept of the abstract for said provision. If he will do it, it will relieve me from many difficulties for by the conduct of Mr. William to me I have every reason to believe that he intends to display his law and chicanerie against me. But if the affair is not settled in a short time I declaire to you that I will seize his store to secure myself, for he may after his contract go to Myreland which is too far for me to go after him. I mention my intention so that his representation when it happens may not alarm you. *Self preservation is the first law in nature.* But if the contractor will accept of such certificates as you mention and pay Ohara and the commissary, I will give him one. I will be oblige to you if you will write or speak to them about such a certificate.[2]

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[1] Hamtramck misdated this letter. It was actually written on the 28th of March. See his next letter to Harmar, April 11, below.

I am fear that the governor will not find many poeple in the Illinois as they are dayly going on the Spanish side.[3] I believe that all our Americans of Post Vincennes will go to Morgan.[4] A number of them are already gone to see him.

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[2] See above, p. 151.

[3] After the close of the Revolution Spain found the new-born American republic right at her back door, and she immediately became apprehensive of its westward expansion. One tactic she hit upon was to encourage American settlers to come over the Mississippi into Spanish territory and thus try to increase a population loyal to herself. In this effort Spain received co-operation from elements in the western country who felt that the Atlantic seaboard received the attention of Congress while the western territory suffered from Indian hostility and lack of government. The willingness of Congress in 1786 to permit the Mississippi to be closed to American shipping caused indignation to soar in the West where frontiersmen "protested they had been sacrificed for the benefit of Eastern fishermen and farmers." Whitaker, *The Spanish-American Frontier,* Chapters III, V, and VII. The breakdown of civil government, the failure to get the territorial government organized, the clause in the Ordinance of 1787 prohibiting slavery in the Northwest Territory, and the break between the French and Americans, caused a migration of the French around Vincennes and in the Illinois country across the Mississippi to the Spanish. See Introduction, pp. 11-12, above.

[4] Col. George Morgan, founder of New Madrid. In the fall of 1788 he negotiated with the Spanish chargé d'affaire in the United States, Diego de Gardoqui, for the grant of a tract of land on the Mississippi opposite the mouth of the Ohio where he would found a colony of American emigrants. The city he would establish would be a port of entry for the direct control of trade descending the Mississippi, and thus control all the commerce west of the Alleghenies. The immigrants would be permitted to bring their slaves, cattle, tools, and other belongings free of duty. In return for his service in founding and directing this colony Morgan would receive a rank in the Spanish army equal to that he held in the American army, and large grants of land for himself and members of his family and certain other benefits.

Morgan issued broadsides advertising for settlers for his colony, promising to those who would go immediately free transportation down the Ohio and the privilege of buying 320 acres of land for 1/8 of a dollar per acre and outlining other inducements. A manuscript copy of Morgan's regulations for the settlement of New Madrid, the name selected for his city, dated April 6, 1789, is in the Harmar Papers. "This expedition of Morgan's was one of the spectacular events of the winter of 1788-89," a biographer of Morgan writes. It was of immense importance to Spain, and

I shall again inform myself of the certainty of the Kickapoos defeating our boats.

Some of the Potowatomies who send to me a message offering to come under the protection of the United States have been at war in Kentuck headed by one of their Chief La Grande Couete. This party was overtaken on their return by a body of militia and killed the chief and wonded four of his warriors. This information I had by a letter I recived from Jean Baptiste Constans of Weeya.

The boat which was left at Kaskaskias I have sold for 150 dollars which mony I have been obliged to pay for the part of the subsistance of the soldiers that were left sick in that country, the contractor not having in power to pay for it. I have given an ordre for the payment of that subsistance (which is 1/3 of a doll pr ration) to the contractor and on which their is the receipt for 150 dollars pay'd by the United States.

Capt. Bradford has paid me five doubloons and Vigo will pay me the £ 8. Pens.mony for which I inclose duplicate receipts.

I shall agreably to your ordres muster the men as pointed out by your direction. Capt. Bradford has some objections but they are immeterial to me.[5] One of the great difficulties is that he dos not know the expiration of the time of those men that he got from Capt. Zeagler. I will be much oblige to you to have it forwarded as soon as possible.

I shall be very glad to know the result of Mr. St. Marie affair.

alarming to some in the United States. It came at the very time the Confederation was dying and the Federal government was being established. Some feared such projects would draw heavily on American manhood. Thomas Jefferson saw it in a different light, and history justified his view. He felt that Spain instead of building up a population loyal to herself was attracting to her side loyal Americans who would remain loyal. Harmar wrote to St. Clair: "The people are all taken up with Colonel Morgan's New Madrid. They are in my opinion Mad-rid indeed." Max Savelle, *George Morgan Colony Builder* (New York, 1932), Chapter X. See also John Rice Jones to Hamtramck, October 29, below, and note.

[5] See below, Bradford to Harmar, March 29.

Since you have left it to me to determine on Mr. Prior going on furlough I have taken the liberty to keep him and have send Mr. Peters to New York (provided you approve of it) for the purpose of helping Capt. Smith in his recruting service and to visit his friends. I am well persuaded that Lieut. Peters will be of infinite service to Capt. Smith.

The mustering will be attended with punctuality at every three months.

I inclose a number of papers which I have got from one Dolman who lieves with the Chawnesse. He tels me that he had been with you last summer.

Wm. Simmons, a yong man, is prisoner at Detroit, John White, a yong man, at the Miamie, Mrs. Brian at Delwar town, and one Charles Heart of Wheeling is at the Miamie.

Inclose the Inspection of military, Q. M. & medical stores. The muster has gone before by the hands of yong Mr. Wells from Coxes fort. The canon shots that have been send for this place are too large, only sixty two of them will do, and we want also a n'other supply of tubes as those that were send are damaged.

I am told that Mr. Morgan has taken unwarrantable measure to invite the poeple of the Illinois to come to him saying that the governor would never come in that country and that their negros were all free the moment the goverment should be established,[6] for which all the remaining good inhabitants disposes to go to him. I can not give you this for certain. I will know better in a short time and inform you.

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[6] The reference here is, of course, to the clause in the Ordinance of 1787 which declared: "There shall be neither Slavery nor involuntary Servitude in the said territory otherwise than in punishment of crimes, whereof the Party shall have been duly convicted. . . ." Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers,* II, 49. The question of whether by the Ordinance those persons held as slaves in 1787 were automatically freed was never determined by a court decision. In a memorial to Congress, July 8, 1788, in behalf of the French inhabitants Bartholomew Tardiveau raised the issue: "Many of the inhabitants of these districts have Slaves. If they wish to preserve their property, they must transport themselves to the Spanish side of the Mississippi. . . ." In another memorial, September 17, 1788, Tardiveau besought Congress "to repeal or modify that article of the Ordinance of Congress of last year which respects the slavery of Negroes in the Western territory, so far as it operates as an Ex post facto law. . . ."

La Grose Tete, a Pyankeshaw chief who killed a man a yong boy at Sullivan Station last year, is now in confindment.

Alvord (ed.), *Kaskaskia Papers,* pp. 488, 493. The committee of Congress reporting on Tardiveau's memorial offered a resolution, September 25, 1788, "That the . . . Ordinance . . . shall not be construed to deprive the Inhabitants of Kaskaskia Illinois Post St. Vincents and the other Villages formerly settled by the French and Canadians, of their Right and property in Negro or other Slaves which they were possessed of at the time of passing the said Ordinance, or in any manner to Manumit or Set free any such negroes or other persons under Servitude within any part of sd. Western territory; any thing in the said Ordinance to the contrary notwithstanding." *Journals of the Continental Congress,* XXXIV, 541. No action was taken on this report, and the Congress was dissolved. The new Congress under the Constitution took no action.

On June 30, 1789, Tardiveau wrote to Governor St. Clair: "The wretched inhabitants of Illinois, who had seen themselves for ten years neglected by the power from which alone they could expect protection, now found that the very first act of attention paid to them pronounced their utter ruin. It was not intended, I know; but it was designedly represented to them, and with many aggravating circumstances rumored that the very moment your Excellency landed at the Illinois all their Slaves would be set free. A panic seized upon their minds, and all the wealthiest among them, having but the wreck of once affluent fortunes, have gone to seek from the Spanish Government that security which they conceived was refused to them. . . . Before the evil becomes more general—before a total desertion of the country—it is in your Excellency's power to apply a corrective for the threatening disaster by obtaining from the Federal Government a resolution declaring the true intent and meaning of the original action." Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 118-19. See also below, Hamtramck to Harmar, August 14, 1789.

Governor St. Clair, who had been president of the Congress when the Ordinance passed, apparently agreed with the interpretation expressed in the resolution quoted above. In his report to the President on his sojourn in the Illinois country in 1790, he said: "The construction that was given to that part of the Ordinance which declares that there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, was, that it did not go to the emancipation of the slaves they were in possession of and had obtained under the laws by which they had formerly been governed, but was intended simply to prevent the introduction of others. In this construction, I hope, the intentions of Congress have not been misunderstood, and the apprehension of the people were quieted by it. But the circumstance that slaves can not be introduced will prevent many people from returning who earnestly wish to return, both from a dislike to the Spanish Government and that the country itself is much less desirable than on the American side. . . ." *Ibid.,* II, 176.

Last summer I send you the deposition relative to this affair.[7] Two reasons have induced me to take him prisoner, first that the first chief of that nation is a man of reason and a good Indian to whom I can represent the conduct of some of his chiefs and demand of him satisfaction for the blood of those people that this prisoner has murdered and will give so much solemnity to the affair as to make the nation believe that his pardon will be the last act of lenity of the United States if they do not change their conduct. A n'other reason was that I had nothing to fear from their resentment, for they are very inconsiderable in numbers and I am shure the whole nation will be with me in a few days, crying for mercy, but after all I whish I could hang the raskall.

Since I have wrote the above I have recived a letter from a French man respecting the Petowatamies. He tels me that he can bring me seven villages. I shall amuse him until I am able to accept of them. For the present, it is out of question. For those people ammunition is wanted (that I have not) as well as provision presents &c.

Some French men from the Weya arrived the 27. They tel me for certain that the Weya Indians as well as some of other villages are gone to war, and that some are for this place.

The contractor boat can not have too strong an escort when it assend the Wabash.

Permit me sir to request that my best respects may be presented to Mrs. Harmar. It is with very great regret that I must inform her that not a pekan can be got in the village but I have thought of her and have precaution to procure some on the Mississipi which will be send to her.

Mr. Henery of this village his made his exit.[8]

A monthly return of the troops is also inclosed and a return of com'y stores. The cloathing arrived in good ordre. I will be very much oblig'd to you if you will inform me in your next of our new goverment.

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[7] See above, pp. 89-90, 92-93.

[8] Hamtramck is probably referring to the death of Moses Henry.

I am, dear general, with every sentiment of respect and estime your most obedient and very humble servant,

J. F. HAMTRAMCK
Major 1st U. S. Rgt.

BRIG'D GENR. HARMAR

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brigadier General Harmar Fort Harmar on the Muskingum

[Endorsed:] Major John F. Hamtramck from Fort Knox at Post Vincennes February 28th 1789. Answered 1789.

CAPT. JAMES BRADFORD TO HARMAR, March 29, 1789

[ALS]

POST VINCENNES 29th March 89

SIR I now do myself the honor of informing you of my safe arrival with my men and stores at this place and transmitting the remaining part of my imperfect notes all of which I hope may meet your concurrence. I am happy in the acknowledgement of every exertion on part of Major Wyllys for the accommodation of myself and men, and feel myself much obligated in the attention I experienced from the judicious arrangements entered into by Major Hamtramck in my ascending the Wabash.

I am sorry to add that some embarrassments have orriginated since my arrival at this place which I will venture to assert was not your intention to operate with me. You will readily agree in my assertion to Major Hamtramck that when we commence the recruiting service under your immediate direction it was with your approbation that *those men* who I then obtained at Fort Harmar should as an inducement to their re-engagement have their enlistment dated from the period of enlistment and not from the expiration of their former service; this has already been the case in every circumstance relative to the before mentioned period under your immediate command, and which I have produced to Major Hamtramck, tho he will not admit it from the paragraph contained in your letter of the 15th February: "You wish to know how the men that have been re-enlisted are to be mustered. Their new enlistments is to be dated from the expiration of their old ones, which will make the regular six years service."

Admitting that order to be obeyed, it would be impossible for me to make out my muster rolls, for as I never entertained an idea that that would be the case, I had not taken the precaution to obtain the dates of the men's old enlistments from Captain Zeigler which order if adhered to, it will be necessary for me to receive. Be pleased then to direct that Mr. Denny[1] may send them to me; but I am confident for my reputation, as well as the fidelity of your officers and soldiers, measures will be adopted that will evince to them they were not intended to be deceived.[2]

Major Hamtramck declines receiving any returns, or my muster rolls from me, as belonging to the battalion of artillery commanded by Major Doughty. This has not only been sanctioned by Congress, but by your signature to my enlistments, and the orders at Fort Harmar, all of which I have produced, but it will not avail as the major says he has not received it officially. For my government I have requested his written order, which he has been pleased to give, and now transmitt a copy for your decision.

> "Sir
>
> "I know nothing of Major Doughty commanding the artillery as a corps independent to the 1st U. S. Regiment. Therefore you will in all your returns to me consider your company as appertaining to the 1st U. S. Regiment.
>
> "Hamtramck
> "Major command'g

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[1] Ens. Ebenezer Denny, adjutant to Harmar.

[2] See below, letter of August 21, 1789, for Harmar's settlement of this point.

"Captain Bradford
"Fort Knox
"28th March 89
(copy)"[3]

On my arrival at this post, I find all the artillery harness deliver [to] the Q master by the order of Major Hamtramck. Should a demand be made for them for the purposes for which I am inclined to believe they were intended [?] you will permit me to remark the difficulties we may labour under for their dificiencies. As the Major had already closed his letter, he has requested me to inform you that this was by his order, and begs that some means may be taken to furnish the Q master at this place with the necessary harness for his department.

I have delivered your memorandum to Dr. Ford, and make no doubt of his attention to it. It was impossible for me to have stopped at the Big Bone,[4] from the severity of the weather, and luckily for me I did not, for I must have experienced every misfortune that the inclemency of the season would have subjected me to.

I found it impossible to obtain any of the pecan nuts at the mouth of the river, from the island and almost every other place being over flowed. The water at this place has not been as high this many years. Fortunately for me I procured a small keg of them when at Louisvil, which I have requested Mr. Ford to take in charge. Permit me to request your acceptance to them and to subscribe myself with every sentiment of respect for Mrs. Harmar and yourself, Dr. General, Your hum'e servant

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[3] Knox straightened out this point in a letter to Harmar on June 10, 1789, in which he instructed Harmar to publish the following orders and transmit them to the various posts: "That the four companies of Artillery commanded by Capts. Ferguson, Bradford, Burbeck and Savage form the 1st battalion of Artillery in the service of the United States of America, commanded by Major Doughty, and that returns of the same ought to be made accordingly." He added that the artillery was as much under Harmar's orders and the orders of the senior officers at the various posts as if they were part of the First Regiment and "eligible to all services ordered for the other troops." Harmar Papers.

[4] Big Bone Lick in Boone County, Kentucky.

J. BRADFORD

BRIGADIER GENERAL HARMAR

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, April 11, 1789
[ALS]

FORT KNOX AT POST VINCENNES
April 11th 1789

DEAR GENERAL My last letter although dated Feb'ry 28, it is intended to be for March the 28th, since which the Indians have been here and stold cattle. It was said at the Weya some days ago by an Indian chief "We have killed white men, we have stold their horses, we are now going to steal their cows, and after that we will go and get their women to milk them." This is a strong figure in the Indian way of expressing themselves. They never had before pretended to steal cattle. I did send a detachment of horse and foot after them but to no purpose.

This moment a Frenchman arrived from the Weya and tels me that all the Wabash Indians (except those that are out hunting) have gone to war in Kentucky. This will for ever be the case as long as we have not Detroit, for they get all their war supplys from that place.

I hope that the commandant of our Miami[1] will keep a good look out for it has been in contemplation and perhaps is yet to attack that setlement. I have also been told that the

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[1] Ens. Francis Luce commanded a small contingent on the Ohio at the Big Miami, guarding the tiny settlement made on Symmes's Miami purchase. On May 8 Harmar described to the Secretary of War the "piecemeal" division of his force of five hundred men: a company at Venango, a subaltern's command near the Falls of Big Beaver River, part of four companies at Fort Harmar from which special detachments were constantly being made, the subaltern's command at the Big Miami mentioned above, part of two companies at the Falls of the Ohio "to afford escorts in ascending the Wabash," and finally a complete company of artillery and twenty men of Captain Smith's company at Fort Knox. According to this only about ninety noncommissioned soldiers were at Fort Knox.

Indians were very jealous of the garrison at Vinango. This French man tels me that all the Indians are about to assemble at the English Miami. I imagine to determine on their war operations for this summer, and if I am authorized to give an opinion in consequence of every intelligence I recive dayly, I must say that every thing draws a picture of hostility in this quarter.

This Frenchman also informs me that the Potawatomies chiefs are coming to see me in this moon. I am sorry that I shall have nothing to give them, but as you recomend me to encourage them under the rose I will do it and make proposition to them, that is, if I can get an interpreter in whom I can have enuff confidence, for I would not trust to mine, he is too much of a Weya. I may have occasion for a quantity of powdre and lead. Please to send me some as soon as possible.

I have the honor to inclose you Mr. Morgan letter *at his request* and one for you.[2] You will see in Mr. Morgan that a post will be established opposite the Ohio and if what Mr. Morgan says is true (which I doubt not) respecting the inhabitans of the Illinois, the governor will have no occasion to go there,[3] and I think that Mr. Morgan opinion of Congress to [MS illegible] would do better in a private letter than in so public one as the inclosed is, and through a better channel than mine of which I shall inform Mr. Morgan.

I think that that setlement will lay under many difficulties. The Delwars, Chawness & other nations who have lieved on the banks of the Mississipi since last year were invited by the Spanish government to come there, and the very land that is in Morgan grant were given to those Indians. They will see that the Spaniards are like the Americans, that when ever they will want land they will take it from them to which certainly the Indians will not submit, for if they muster together they will make 600 men and able to cut off New Madrid and the other setlements, beside if Spain should be at war with the English or Americans *the later not improbable* then adieu to New Madrid, for they could no doubt get Indians enuff to destroy those setlements if it should be found necessary.[4]

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[2] Not found.

[3] Meaning that Morgan's settlement will have drawn away the inhabitants of the Illinois. See above, pp. 158n-59n.

A small supply of provision arrived the other day. I should be very glad if you would be so good as to inform me in your next of the quantity of provision you have ordered for this place, also to let me know how the new government comes on, for I am intirely ignorant of it and feel very anxious to know. I should also like to know if the state of New York has taken up the requesition of Congress respecting the troops and your opinion on it if they have not.[5]

I have taken the liberty to write to the commandant of the Miami informing him of his situation.

In our present situation of affairs I would recommend very strong escort to the provision assending the Wabash and have troops on both side of the river.

I will be very much oblige to you if you will be pleased to present my best respect to Mrs. Harmar and to tel Doughty if he is arrived to write me the neuse of our country.

I have the honor to be, sir, with very great respect and estime your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. HAMTRAMCK
Maj. 1st U. S. Regt.

Will you be so good as to inform me[6] if Congress have changed their resolution respecting the freedom of the Negros of this country and if they are free from the day of the resolve or if from the day it is published in a district.

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[4] For a confirmation of the idea of Indian opposition to the New Madrid settlement see Armstrong to Asheton, June 25, 1789, below.

[5] It was reported in Congress in October, 1788, that the New York legislature had failed to pass the legislation necessary to provide New York's quota under the action of Congress in 1787 providing for the re-enlistment of the seven hundred noncommissioned officers and privates called for in 1785. It was expected that she would do it at her next legislative session. *Journals of the Continental Congress,* XXXIV, 579. Perhaps this is the matter that Hamtramck refers to.

[6] For Harmar's reply see his letter of October 25 below.

We have not the article of war in the garrison. I had one *but it is gone.* Orde[r]ly book much wanted.

[Addressed:] Brig'd Gen'r Harmar Fort Harmar

[Endorsed:] Major John F. Hamtramck from Fort Knox at Post Vincennes, April 11th 1789. Answered 1789.

HAMTRAMCK TO MAJ. JOHN P. WYLLYS, MAY 27, 1789[1]

[ALS]

FORT KNOX AT POST VINCENNES May 27th 1789

DEAR WYLLYS A number of events compels me to send an express to the falls. I informed you in my last that by every information I had obtained I had reason to suppose that the Indians of the Wabash and Miami were badly disposed. They have (to my mortification) not disappointed me for, for some days passed they have killed a number of people. The discrimination of French & English is done with; the Negros are the only ones who have a chance of their lifes (I suppose because they sell well).

On the 16th instant a French man who leaved on the other side of the river was killed in the night, his wife and one children were scalped an[d] wonded. They are stil a life. On the 24 four French pirogues were defeated 7 leages from here, 4 men were killed, 3 mortally wonded, one is prisoner, and the remaining made their escape to the village.[2] The first was done by the Indians of the Riviere a l'Anguille, and the other by the Weeya. Henry Richard[8] for whom you was a godfather is also killed and a number of others have been made prisoners. I shall send to the Indians towns and try to stopd these carnages.

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[1] Wyllys had left the Falls for the East by this time and Captain Joseph Asheton was in command. He forwarded this letter to Harmar and dispatched Lieut. John Armstrong to Fort Knox with supplies.

[2] This may be the incident that was reported as follows in the Lexington *Kentucky Gazette,* June 6, 1789: "About the 20th ult. the Indians fired on 9 French men going up the Wabash River, killed 4 and wounded three: coming to the dead, they discovered one of them to be a French trader, who was married to a daughter of Jo Brant the famous Indian chief, on which they assisted in pulling the arrows out of the wounded men, then went off, leaving everything unmolested farther." According to a letter of Antoine Gamelin to John Askin, Detroit merchant, it was the Kickapoo, not the Miami, who made this attack. Quaife (ed.), *John Askin Papers,* I, 319-20.

But now to the point. Yesterday a French man in whom from his general character I must put confidance informed that he had that day gone to the woods and that four Indians come to him and finding him to be one of their parents told him we will not hurt you but you must tel our parents in the village (meaning a number of French families with whom they were related) that we are sorry for their situation for the Indians from above are coming at the latter end of this moon (*this is the commencement*) to strike on the village.

This news my friend may and may not be true. I have found by experience that many Indian neus have proved to be faulse; also others have been true. I think however that an officer should always prepare for the worst, and I s[h]all do it. I am no ways conserned for the garrison provoided I have provision. I would therefore beg of you to send me a supply immediatly, and it must arrive in 16, 18 or 20 days from this: for if it can not be here at that time my opinion (with submition to yours) would be not to send any until you heard from me, for if the place should be invaded before it arrives, and that it should be coming up, it must unevitably fall in the hands of the Indians, but on the other hand if nothing should happen, we can get supplys from the village such as it is, but the most important question, to us must remain undeterminate, if the provision should not come in time and that we should be attacked.

Time dos not permit me to write to the general. I never had so much business as I have had this day, but I mean that you will send him this immediatly or an extract of it. Inform the troops at the Miami to keep a good look out. I cannot send a return of the provision to the general for their is none. The bargain made betwixt Mr. Sullivan[4] the express and Capt. Mills the commissary is, that Sullivan shall return whenever you dispatch him which I hope will not exede a day after he is arrived.

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[8] A citizen of Kaskaskia. See Alvord (ed.), *Kaskaskia Papers,* index, for references to him.

I am in hopes that when the governor arrives he will give an other face to the affairs of this country for their situation is deplorable. A chaine of three block-houses and canons might secure the village. But this can not be done without more troops. A number of circumstances gives probability to the affair in question which is that the comunication betwixt the Miami and the village has been stoped for a long time and a merchent from this place who had been taken prisoner made his escape from the Weya and he informs me that for certain the Indians were preparing for some capital stroke. I would have the boats not over loaded to enable them to ascent the Wabash with ease.

I am dear Wyllys your friend and humble servent

J. F. Hamtramck
Maj. 1st U. S. Rgt.

[Endorsed by Harmar:] Major Hamtramck's letter to Major Wyllys, May 28th 1789 from Post Vincennes. Answered in my letter to Captain Ashton of July 25th 1789.

Post Vincennes May 27th 1789

Dear Wyllys, This is after my letter. I intended to mention to you Mr. Sullivan. I know that he dos not stand in good light in the eyes of your officers, but let his private character be what it will in this moment he is very servisable man to me, and ended [indeed] the only one I could get and beg for political reasons may be treated with attention.

J. F. Hamtramck

Sir, The intelligence of the letter the bearer knows nothing of it, neither dos any body in this place. I wish for particular reasons that you will not mention it to be public until he is gone.

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[4] Probably Daniel Sullivan, citizen of Vincennes.

J. F. Hamtramck Maj. Comd't

Capt. Joseph Asheton to Hamtramck, May 31, 1789

[Copy]

Copy of a letter to Major Hamtramck
Fort Steuben Rapids of Ohio 31st May 1789

Sir Your letter pr express of 27th directed to Major Wyllys on public services came to hand at one oclock this day. Major Wyllys having left this place eight days since for the Muskingum, and from thence to N. York, I have taken the liberty to open it, and am made acquainted with the very important news it contains. I have the pleasure to inform you that the supplies you so much wish for will arrive by the time you expect them. Mr. Sullivan who will be the bearer of this, will leave the lower town on his return tomorrow morning at break of day. He was remarkably attentive and punctual to his agreement with Capt. Mills. I have, agreably to your wish paid that attention to him you requested and have also been particular in not mentioning to him any part of the intelligence alluded to. Tomorrow or next day, I shall forward your letter & other papers by express to Genl. Harmar, by the way of Limestone, and shall also give Ensign Luse[1] (who commands at the Miami) a caution to be on his guard, by the same conveyance. The contractors' boats with seven months' supply of provisions for 140 men for your garrison, leave the lower landing at 3 oclock this day. The men belonging to them am't to fifty, all armed. In addition to these, I have sent an escort, one Lieut., one Ensign, one Cadet, two Serg'ts, one Corp'l and forty privates. With this number of men there can be no great danger of its arriving safe.

In this place I must observe to you that some of the boats are large and unwieldy, drawing at least two feet six in., and from your remark of the boats being lightly loaded, I have my fears about their getting up. In this case it will be necessary, (with submission to your better judgment) in order the more effectually to secure the provisions, for Capt. Mills to procure a sufficient number of craft, to send immediately down the Wabash to meet the boats, and lighten them that they may all ascend with greater ease & safety. The boats will arrive at the mouth of the Wabash by the time this reaches you. A large bundle of letters will be handed to you by Lieut. Armstrong, who commands the party.

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[1] Ens. Francis Luce, of New Jersey.

Major Wyllys, Doc't Allison,[2] Ens. Sedam, Cadet John Morgan, and Maj. Finley left this place on Sunday 24th inst. for Muskingum. Capt. Mercer went up the river with Lt. Ford and then on furlough to Jersey. One of the boats above mentioned, and which has the principle part of the provisions on board is keel bottom'd, about 70 feet in length. This boat I apprehend could not get up the Wabash empty, you may therefore judge the expedience of sending down small craft.

I am &c &c

Jos. Asheton Capt.
1st U. S. Regt.

Major Hamtramck

Lieut. John Armstrong to Hamtramck, June 11, 1789[1]

[ALS]

Sir, Agreable to orders received from Captain Ashton I embarked from the Rapids of the Ohio on the evening of the 30th ultimo with an escort consisting of one ensign one cadet and forty three noncommissioned officers and privates. I entered the Wabash on the evening of the 3d inst. and proceeded to assend the river keeping small parties on shore for the purpose of discovering signs of the enimy in case they should be laying in wait for us. On the fourth I saw where five had crossed to the western side of the river. Those I conclude had been on the Ohio as a party of observation and remained there untill they saw me enter the Wabash. At the

[2] Richard Allison, surgeon's mate.

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[1] This letter was enclosed in Hamtramck's letter to Harmar of July 29, below.

mouth of the Little Wabash I also discovered fresh tracks. This led me to believe the Indians were in force and waiting some where on the river. On the 5th I was joined by a detachment from your garrison commanded by Lieut. Schuyler.[2] On the 6th I saw at the Grand Chain where a party had been a little time before in ambush. On the 9th between Coffee Island and White River, destroyed several pirouges & bark cannoes, in one of which we got a tomhawk & match coat & routed two parties of Indians. From appearances at this place the enimy was in force and as it was not my business to seek an oportunity of coming to action, I crossed to the Point of White River and after making my incampment secure, sent a detachment for the corps of a soldier killed a few hours before who had been sent express to meet me.[3] He was shot in two places with balls, had two arrows sticking in his body, was skalped, his heart taken out and his privates cut off. I had him interd and on the morning of the 10th proceeded on with my detachment taking the necessary precaution to avoid faling into an ambuskade, and about 10 oclock fell in with a soldier who had been wounded the day before in company with him who was killed. I proceeded that evening within 12 miles of Fort Knox and on the morning of the 11th about 10 oclock joined the detachment of villagers under your command.

In the course of my passage up the river I met no unexpected dificulties, but beg leave to observe I found a single ration of provision too little for men performing such hard service. I allowed my party some extra whisky and beg leave to offer it as an opinion that a single ration in the performance of this kind of service where the greatest expedition and utmost exertions are necessary is insufficient. I beg leave also to observe that the mode of supplying your post would be more eligable were the provisions transported intirely by soldiers, and offer the following reasons. At present the transporting the stores is undertaken by men who have no knowledge of the river and unacquainted with the use of the oar or siting pole. A number ingaged for this service [is] only sufficient to work the boats and when any of them take sick their place must either be supplied by soldiers or the stores remain so long on the river that the enimy may have time to collect what force they please to cut of[f] the party. The passage from the Ohio may be performed by juditious workmen in seven days, but when left to such as generally undertake this business will double that time.

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[2] Lieut. Dirck Schuyler, of New York.

[3] A man by the name of Litch (?), a soldier in Capt. James Bradford's company. See Hamtramck to Harmar immediately below.

I hope sir that my conduct in the execution of this business will meet your approbation. I am sir with respect your obed't and very humble serv't,

John Armstrong Lieut 1st U. S. R.

Fort Knox 11th June 1789
to Major Hamtramck

Hamtramck to Harmar, June 15, 1789
[ALS]

Fort Knox at Post Vincennes June 15th 1789

Dear General I suppose that you have received my letter of the 27 of May directed to Major Wyllys (a duplicate of which I inclose) and since which Lt. Amstrong arrived with a cargo of provision. The risk he has undergone has been very great, and as I had been inform'd that the Indians were in force on the Wabash I send down an officer with thirty men to Lieut. Amstrong which made his party of 73 men. On the 7th of June I recived information by some French men that a large party of Indians had gone twards White River, which induced me to suppose that they had gone with a design to make a lodgement either at the head of the Grand Rapid, White River, or Coffee Island. I then the same day send two soldiers and an Indian in a canoe to Lt. Amstrong directing them to reconnoitre the above places, that if they found that the enemy had made a lodgement for one of them to return by land to me and the other two to go to Lieut. Amstrong and inform him, with direction to Lieut. Amstrong not to pass Coffee Iland, that I should be with him the next day with the militia. On the 8th in the morning the two soldiers and the Indian were attaked below White River where the Indians had made a lodgement on both side of the river. One was killed (Litch of Bradford) and the other was wonded but made his escape to Amstrong and the Indian came to me about 3 oclock P. M. that day. I then ordered one hundred men of the militia to go down that evning and finding that the greatest interest of the United States laid below I went down my self with intention to dislodge them at the day brake. But was very agreably disapointed in finding Lt. Armstrong within 12 miles of the garrison so that I am of opinion that this accident has been the means of our getting the provision with so little difficulties, concluding that the Indians knowing that two had made their escape would give information. I inclose the report of Lieut. Amstrong to me by which you will see the signs he had of the Indians during his journey.

Capt. Amstrong has very great credit for the fatigue he has undergone and if he has not been deafeated before he came to Coffee Iland I [am] well persuaded it is owing to his great attention.

I have had the Indians of the Illinois with me respecting Gross Tête (*the Indian who was confind*) and altho' he had made his escape before they arrived the affaire was setled amicably and on strong promises from the chiefs that it would be the last impropriety that their nation should comit.

I have again send to the Indians on the Wabash with a strong invitation to cease their depredation, assuring them that if they did not they would be severely chastised. I expect the two Illinois Indians I have sent on that embassy will return in a few days. However every thing that I can do, can not be of much consequence, for I have neither means or power, and no body but the governor can establish a peace with them.[1]

The affair of Mr. Vigo will be attended to. He is at L'Ance a la Graise. I can not close this letter without informing you of the cherful disposition of the French and the few Americans I had with me. They have in number of instances given me convincing proofs of their attachment to the United States.

I am dear general with very great respect and estime your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. HAMTRAMCK
Maj. 1st U. S. Rgt.

Will you be pleased to present my best respects to Mrs. Harmar.

[Addressed:] Hon'ble Brig'd Gen'l Harmar Fort Harmar

[Endorsed:] Major John F. Hamtramck from Fort Knox at Post Vincennes June 15th 1789, inclosing a duplicate of his letter to Major Wyllys. Answered 1789.

LIEUT. JOHN ARMSTRONG TO CAPT. JOSEPH ASHETON, June 25, 1789

[ALS]

SIR Agreably to your orders of the 30th ultimo I proceeded with my escort for Post Vincennes and arrived there on the 11th inst. where I made report of the detachment &c to Major Hamtramck. On the 15th I took my departure for this garrison. Met Mr. Vigo on the Wabash who informed me the savages with whom he had been trading near the mouth of the Ohio were much displeased at Americans & others having setled at New Madrid or Lans le Grass. He said a party of the chiefs were actually on their way to Post Vincennes and intended to request the commanding officer there to have them removed. That if he did not they were determined to fall on them. He also informed me that when he was on the Ohio a few miles from the Mississippi that he heard a heavy fire of small arms that it had the appearance of an engagement and continued for some time. The firing appeared to him to be on the Point.

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[1] On July 25, 1789, over a month after this letter was written, Harmar was writing to Capt. Asheton: "Major Hamtramck is now well supplied with provisions; there cannot be much danger even if the savages make an attack upon the village; with the force he already has, & calling out the militia of Post Vincennes to his aid, he can certainly be able to bid them defiance. At any rate it is out of my power to furnish him with a further reenforcement at present." Harmar Papers.

In ascending the Ohio I saw tracks of several parties of Indians who appeared to have been waiting an opportunity to attack my party had they found us relaxed in our duty. I had the good fortune however to return without any accident or the loss of a single man. I conclude the expedition made by the exertions of the party prevented the enimy from collecting in force sufficient to march as I should have been here one day sooner but was detained that time on the Wabash giving protection to a boat bound for Orleans.

I am sir with due respect your obed't serv't

John Armstrong
Lieut. 1st U. S. R.

Fort Finney 25 June 1789
Capt. Ashton Commandant

Hamtramck to Harmar, July 29, 1789

[ALS]

Fort Knox at Post Vincennes July 29th 1789

Dear General The last I had the honor to write you was the 15th of last June, in which I was to inclose Lieut. Armstrong report to me during his assending the Wabash, but by a mistake it was neglected. I now inclose it.

In my last I informed you that I had send to the Wabash Indian an invitation to cease their carnages since which a number of them have come down from the Weeya; they spoke to me with a submition rare to be seen with Indians, they gived me thousans protestations of their repentance and they went back assuring me that all their parties at war would be called in. They told me that if their yong men refused to live amicabely with us that they would leave them and come under the protection of the United States, in fact the French tells me that they never had heard the Indians speak in so humiliating maner. I suppose that their povrety obliges them to make friend with us.

The garrison is very sickly, forty nine men are this day sick with the intermitting fever, and what chagrins me most is that we have not an ounce of bark, and the sick obliged to live on salt provision for the want of hospital stores. The knowledge I have of our sickly climate as well from observation as from personal experiance obliges me to represent the difficiency in our supply of medicine, and Doctor Elliot informs me that a great part of the little he has received has been of a very bad quality. This I know that he gives 8 to ten grains of tarter emetic when 2 or 3 ought to perform the operation and I am well persuaded that every man who composes this garrison can take a pound of bark during the sickly season.

The acc't of Mr. Vigo will be made against the late contracter.[1]

As in my last letter I mentioned to you that I had left the garrison to go down to the relief of Lieut. Armstrong and as it is some thing uncommon for the commandant of a garrison to leave it (Col. Bidle last war was broked for having left his garrison at the Cedres in Canada) it may not be impropre for me to give my reasons. In the first place I had not an ounce of provision in store, second I had received information that an attack was premeditated on the village in a few days, which if it had taken place would have cut off any supplys I might have expected, thirdly I knew that the Indians were sufficiently in force to prevent Lieut. Armstrong from ascending and finding, that the post I occupied was not the key of a Medeteranian, I concluded that it was not 70 yards of grond which was in question but that it was my duty to be where ever the greatest interest of the United States happened to be. I hope sir that these circumstances will justify my conduct and if it should be an error in me I hope that your goodness will consider the motives which induced it.

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[1] James O'Hara. See above, pp. 70, 92, 137, 148-49.

The time for which the magistrates of Post Vincennes were to serve expired last April and as I expected the governor in June or July I advised the people to wait for his excellency's arrival but if it should happen that the governor could not come this summer I beg you would be so good as to inform him of this and that he would be pleased to send me some directions.[2]

Of late I have not heard of much hostilities being done by the savages. I believe that it will be pretty safe for his excellency to come to this country.

The following is a copy of the late advices from New Orleans which you may not perhaps have been informed of. It is copied from Mr. Peyroun[3] who is the commandant of St. Genevieve so that I conceive their is no doubt of its authenticity and I have translated it in to English.

Extract of the latest advice from the governor general of Louisiana to the commandants of the posts on the Mississippy—

"The king has permited to the inhabitants living on the American side to settle themselfs in this province (vagabonds exepted). Those who will accept of this offer will have liberty to continue in their religion but they will not have the privilage of exercising it in public, therefore all churches shall be Catholick and served by priest from Irland. What ever emigrants may bring with them of commoditys or other effects to them appertaining will be free from all taxes of entrance.

"The inhabitans of Fort Pitt, Post Vincennes, of Kentuckey, of Comberland, at Kaskaskias, Caokia, and of other settlements, altho' not settled on the territory of Spain will have liberty to send all their commoditys and productions to New Orleans by paying only 15 pr cent of entrance."

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[2] Governor St. Clair was in New York and remained there until December. He arrived at Fort Washington, at the site of Cincinnati, on January 2, 1790, on his way to the Illinois country.

[3] Henri Peyroux de la Coudrienne. See above, p. 50n.

I think that this event will be a very great obstruction to Morgan Settlement as the duty not being more than 15 pr cent I can not think that any Americans will be foolish enough to sell their liberty to be gouverned by dispots at so low a price.[4]

I have the honor to inclose the companys inspection return of the two last inspections. I would have send them before but I did not know of Wyllys going up or any safe oportunity. Mr. Vigo has also the muster rolls for Capt. Beaty, also is inclosed the inspection of military and ordnance stores for the inspection of April. I can not send you the one of July for Capt. Bradford is sick. The Returns of Q. M. stores and that of the medicines is also inclosed. Mr. Vigo will give Mrs. Harmar some nuts. I am sory that I could not procure more.

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[4] On December 1, 1788, the Spanish Council of Ministers decided to permit all American frontiersmen to use the Mississippi as far south as New Orleans subject to 15 per cent duty which might be reduced to 6 per cent in individual cases by the Governor of Louisiana. Whitaker, *The Spanish-American Frontier,* pp. 101-2.

Hamtramck's observation here coincided with James Wilkinson's conclusion on the effect of the 15 per cent duty. Wilkinson, who had been engaging with the Spanish in a scheme for separating the western country from the eastern states, wrote to Governor Miró on January 26, 1790, "The general permission to export the products of this country through the Mississippi river, on paying a duty of 15 per cent., has worked the consequences which I feared, because, every motive of discontent having thus been removed, the political agitation has subsided, and to-day there is not one word said about separation nor are the effects produced by this pernicious system less fatal in relation to our plan of fostering emigration to Louisiana. Every year, the inhabitants and landholders of these parts had ever present to their minds the terrible prospect of seeing their produce perish in their hands for want of a market, but now they no longer have any such apprehensions on account of the ready outlet they find at New Orleans. . . ." Quoted in Charles Gayarré, *History of Louisiana . . .* (4 volumes. New Orleans, 1903), III, 277.

I am dear general with every sentiments of respect and estime your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. HAMTRAMCK
(turn over)

P. S. I am this moment inform'd that the people of Kentuck are going on an expedition against the Wabash Indians and from every circumstances I believe it.[5] But Mr. Vigo who will pass at the Falls will be able to inform you better. I am also inform'd that one Daniel Sulivan from this place and others from this place are gone to meet the Kentuck people. If so I shall be glad of your direction how and what I am to do with them when the[y] return.

Since I have wrote the above I have recived a message from the Weya Indians with new protestations of their good intentions and as a testimony of it, they have send me one of our deserters they had with them, another will also be sent. A number of Indians were coming to the village. But this Kentuck affair will undo every thing. It is very mortifying to see the authority of the United States so much insulted.

I would be very much oblig'd to you if you would order me some cloathing for a private servent I have.

This other deserter that I expect will be sent down, is a corporal[6] who lifted his guard and deserted with the one that is return and whom at that time was a prisoner in the guard house under the charge of this corporal. If he is sent to me as a [I] expect he will, I will keep him in confindment until I hear from you, as I think his crime is too great to be tryd by a garrison court martial. If you are pleased to order a General Court one officer will only be wanted as I can be the president.

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[5] On August 26 Captain Asheton, commanding at Fort Steuben at the Falls of the Ohio, wrote Harmar that an expedition of Kentuckians led by Maj. John Hardin had marched from Clarksville on August 3 for the Wea towns. "On the 9th at one o'clock, & within one day's journey of the town, they fell in with a party of Shawanese 22 in no. men women & children. They had kindled their fires & turn'd out their horses to feed, with their bells open, by which means they were discovered. The spies instead of giving the information to the command'g officer gave it to the advance guard, who without orders rush'd on to the attack in such disorder, that they only kill'd three men, a boy, three squaws & a child & took two children prisoner; the remainder got off unhurt, and took with them eight or ten of the Kentuckians best horses. Two of the militia were badly wounded and Major Harden returned on the 15th without attempting any thing farther." Harmar Papers.

[6] Cpl. David Core. See below, Knox to Harmar, August 25, 1790.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, August 14, 1789
[ALS]

FORT KNOX AT POST VINCENNES August 14th 1789

DEAR GENERAL In my last I had the honor to inform you of an expedition made by the people of Kentuck against the Wabash Indians. A party of them are now in this place on their return to Kentuck. This expedition consisted of 220 men who have gone near the Weeya, killed 12 Indians. All this great campagn whas done in 16 days. It may be call'd a provocation for I am well persuaded that they will pay for it and perhaps this village. Some Americans of this village were with them. Mr. Daniel Sullivan and one Mr. Duff[1] and others. Mr. Duff was walking this day in the streets with two scalps fasened on a stick. If those people are to be taken notice of I shall execute your directions with very great pleasure, and I am this moment at a s[t]and about confinding them. It is very mortifying to me to see the authority of the United States so much sneered at and not having sufficient power to chastise the aggressors.[2]

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[1] Perhaps Michael Duff, of Kaskaskia.

[2] The people of Kentucky were not without incentive for these raids against the Indians, for their settlements were constantly being attacked, their horses stolen, and men, women, and children murdered, scalped, or wounded. Governor St. Clair wrote to President Washington on September 14, 1789, "The constant hostilities between the Indians who live on the Wabash, and the people of Kentucky, must necessarily be attended with such embarrassing circumstances to the Government of the Western territory, that I am induced to request you will be pleased to take the matter into consideration. . . .

"It is not to be expected, sir, that the Kentucky people will or can, submit patiently to the cruelties and depredations of those savages; they are in the habit of retaliation, perhaps without attending precisely to the

The corporal who had deserted when on guard was brought to me the other day by the Weeya Indians and he is now in confindment until you determine about his tryal. A number of people had gone and were about going from the Illinois to the Spanish side in consequance of a resolve of Congress respecting the Nigros who (as it was reported particularly by Mr. Morgan) were to be freed. Some people from the Illinois had wrote me conserning it, but I was perfectly ignerant of the matter which induced me to write to Mr. B. Tardeveau at the Falls, and who informs me that he had wrote me last Decemb[er] from New York and to the people of the Illinois on this affair, but that he is inform'd his letters were intercepted, that the resolve of Congress respecting the slavery of this country was not intended to extend to the Nigros of the old French inhabitans, which intelligence I had immediatly published and will communicate to the Illinois as soon as possible.[3]

It appears to me that he or them that has intercepted those letters must have had a very great interest in the depopulation of the Illinois. It is hard to suspect but I can not help it.

If his excellency dos not come this year or some of the judges most poeple will go way to the Spaniards for they begin to think that there is no such a man as a governor or judges.

We continue very sick. I inclose a monthly return which you will see how we are pinched to do duty.

One Mr. Jones[4] writes me from Kaskaskias that there are strict orders arriv'd at St. Louis from New Orleans to prevent all trade or corespondence between them and Michilimakinac

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nations from which the injuries are received. . . . The United States, on the other hand, are at peace with several nations; and should the resentment of those people fall upon any of them, which it is likely enough may happen, very bad consequences will follow. . . ." *American State Papers. Indian Affairs* (2 volumes. Washington, D. C., 1832), I, 58. Brief accounts of the Indian depredations in Kentucky are given in *ibid.*, I, 84-85. See below, Knox to Harmar, December 19, 1789, for Presidential disapproval of unauthorized expeditions against the Indians, which must have pleased Hamtramck greatly if the word ever reached him.

[3] See above, pp. 160n-61n.

[4] John Rice Jones.

and the eastern parts of the Mississipi on pain of having their whole property confiscated but I do not give it to you for certain.

I am dear general with very great respect and esteem your most obedient and very humble servent

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

Please to present my respects to Mrs. Harmar

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brig'd General Harmar Fort Harmar on the Muskingum

[Endorsed:] Major John F. Hamtramck Fort Knox at Post Vincennes August 14th 1789. Answered 1789.

ELI WILLIAMS TO HARMAR, August 14, 1789

[ALS]

PITTSBURGH 14th Aug't '89

DR GEN'L,

. . . .

The large supply of provisions forwarded in our boats in March and by Small & McKee in May to Post Vincennes we supposed would amply supply the wants of the garrison there untill November by which time fresh stores and good water w'd have enabled us with convenience to furnish additional supplies, but our agents inform us that after paying their debts they had not more flour than w'd carry the issues to the first of September, and urge the impossibility of getting any relief there to shew the necessity of the utmost exertion on our part to prevent the garrison from suffering. We have therefore determined to load and send forward tomorrow or next day a large keel boat with 100 barrels flour, with a plentiful supply of whiskey & some small stores to which will be added at the Rapids a supply of pork, which will make up a comfortable supply provided it arrives safe and in good time. To effect which we have selected ten of the best boatmen in the western waters and have raised their ambition of the spur of the occasion, and expect their exertions will do them credit. But their greatest efforts must be rendered fruitless without military aid and protection through the dangers of the passage.

The delays which in some instances have been occasioned at the Rapids for want of men to furnish an escort, induces me to trouble you with a request that on this pressing occasion you will direct that the necessary escort may be furnished without loss of time, and I am led to press this request that the escort may be as formidable as possible as the loss of these stores (which are considerable and co'd not be replaced at this scarce season) w'd most materially injure all concerned in their safe arrival.

I am in hopes that about this time a detachment may be moving toward Post Vincennes as you intend to augment the number of troops there.[1] This may make it convenient but if this should not be the case I shall have the fullest relyance on your ordering such protection to this party and stores as you may think necessary and proper.

I am with highest esteem for Elliot & myself your much obliged and most obedient servant

Eli Williams

Gen'l Harmar

16th August: On loading the Kentucky boat she proved unfit for a voyage. Have therefore detained her to make the necessary repairs, and meanwhile have got ready the boat for Post Vincennes & send them together. The water rises this morning; therefore hope they will meet no obstructions on their passage to the posts for which they are bound.

[Addressed:] General Josiah Harmar Muskingum

[Endorsed:] Mr. Eli Williams contractor, from Pittsburgh. August 14th & 16th 1789. Answered August 25th 1789

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[1] This proved to be true. See below, Harmar to McCurdy and to Hamtramck, August 21, below.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, August 17, 1789

[ALS]

POST VINCENNES August 17th 1789

DEAR GENERAL, Since I had the honor to write you which was by Mr. Vigo a man who was taken prisoner by the Indians has come from Detroit and informs me that the English at Detroit had taken a plan of a fort which was to be build on other side of the river, that 500 Canadians were expected from Canada to build it, and that the courts of justice were no more held on our side but they crosed the river at every court days and held it on their side.

One Mr. Yourd writes from Detroit that 50 artificers were arrived from Canada to build and repair the vessels, that a number of sea officers and men had also arrived.

The Chawnesse who are on the Mississipy might be brough[t] to our side. Mr. Vigo can tell you how that is.

I am dear general your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brig'd Genr. Josh. Harmar Ft. Harmar on the Muskingum

[Endorsed:] Major John F. Hamtramck from Post Vincennes August 17th 1789 Answered 1789

HARMAR TO CAPT. WILLIAM MCCURDY, August 21, 1789

[Letterbook Copy]

FORT HARMAR, August 21st 1789

SIR, You are hereby ordered to embark with your company on board the boat called the Governor's Barge, and the Kentucky boat, and to take under your escort the large keel boat laden with provisions, and to proceed with all possible diligence to Post Vincennes, & there to place yourself under the command of Major Hamtramck.[1]

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[1] Fort Knox was now to be manned by Captain McCurdy's and Captain Bradford's companies and "the few men" of Captain Smith's company. Harmar to Knox, August 23, 1789. Harmar Papers.

In ascending the Wabash the most pointed attention & vigilance is to be observed. The provisions is an object of the greatest consequence. By this conveyance I write to Major Hamtramck upon the subject; which letter you will be particularly careful to forward to him from the Rapids of the Ohio. The Wabash perhaps may be too low for the large keel boat to ascend, in which case Major Hamtramck will send down perrogues to receive the provisions at the mouth of the Wabash, and to forward it from thence to Post Vincennes.

I wish you a safe and agreeable passage, and am your h'ble serv't,

Jos. Harmar
Lt. Col. Com. 1st U. S. Reg't.

Captain McCurdy

Harmar to Hamtramck, August 21, 1789

[Letterbook Copy]

Fort Harmar, August 21st 1789

Dear Major, I have received your several letters, but have not time at present to particularly reply to them. The water is in a fine state, and I embrace this opportunity to send you Capt. McCurdy's company: I believe you will find them to be young hearty fellows, altho' recruits. Captain McCurdy takes under his escort a large keel boat laden with provisions for you; about 100 bls. flour & a considerable quantity of whiskey is on board; you will make arrangements for his ascending the Wabash in safety. I am making preparations to fix head quarters some where between the two Miamis. I do not expect Beatty will be here before October. The Governor is detained in New York upon the same account, want of money. Give my compliments to Captain Bradford & your officers; I will write to him shortly. Enclosed is Doctor Scott's[1] invoice of medecine which I send you.

When Bradford re-enlisted his men at this Post, they were not engaged so as to make out a six years' enlistment: the measure met with my approbation at that time, therefore I wish you to muster them accordingly.[2]

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[1] Dr. John M. Scott, surgeon's mate. The invoice has not been found.

In haste I am, Dear Major, with very great esteem & regard your h'ble serv't,

Jos. Harmar
Lt. Col. Com. 1st U. S. Reg't.

Major Hamtramck Com'g Officer at Fort Knox at Post Vincennes

[Marginal note:] Original & duplicate &c pr Captain McCurdy, to be forwarded from the Rapids of the Ohio

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Hamtramck to Harmar, September 4, 1789

[ALS]

Fort Knox at Post Vincennes
Sept. 4th 1789

Dear General, Since I have had the honor to write you my last which was by Mr. Vigo, nothing has happened. I have only to inform you that I received your letter of the 21st of August and Capt. McCurdey is this day assending the Wabash. I have not heard of any large body of Indians on the river, so that I am in expectation that he will arrive without accidents. I have send down an Indian to him who will be able to discover if any partys are on the river.

I am dear sir with my best respects to Mrs. Harmar your most obedient and very humble servent.

J. F. Hamtramck

Brig'd Gener. Harmar

P. S. I should have gone up the river long ago if I had not expected the governor. If he should not come this autumn I will be oblige to you for your permition to go up this fall or early in the spring.

[Endorsed:] Major John F. Hamtramck from Fort Knox at Post Vincennes, Sept. 4th 1789. Answered January 13 1790

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[2] See above, Bradford to Harmar, March 29, 1789, and Hamtramck to Harmar, March 28, 1789, pp. 159, 163-64.

FATHER JACOBIN LE DRU,[1] JOHN EDGAR,[2] AND CITIZENS OF KASKASKIA, TO HAMTRAMCK, September 14, 1789[3]

[DS]

To JOHN FRANCIS HAMTRAMCK Esquire, major of the first United States Regiment and commandant at Post Vincennes &c &c

The inhabitants of Kaskaskias in the Illinois beg leave to address you, as the next commanding officer in the service of the United States, to lay before you the deplorable situation we are reduced to, and the absolute necessity of our being speedily succoured, to prevent as well our own total ruin, as that of the place.[4]

The Indians are greatly more numerous than the white people, and are rather hostilely inclined: The name of an American among them is a disgrace, because we have no superior: our horses, horned cattle and corn are stole and destroyed without the power of making any effectual resistance: our houses are in ruin & decay; our lands are uncultivated; debtors absconded and absconding, our little commerce destroyed. We are apprehensive of a dearth of corn, and our best prospects are misery and distress, or what is more than probable, an untimely death by the hands of savages.

We are well convinced that all these misfortunes have befallen us for want of some superior or commanding authority; for ever since the cession of this territory to Congress we have been neglected as an abandoned people, to encounter all the difficulties that are always attendant upon anarchy and confusion, and neither did we know from authority untill latterly, to what power we were subject. The greater part of our citizens have left the country on this account to reside in the Spanish dominions, others are now following, and we are fearful, nay certain, that without your assistance, the small remainder will be obliged to follow their example.

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[1] A Dominican sent to Kaskaskia by Bishop John Carroll. His stay in Kaskaskia was brief. See below, Jones to Hamtramck, October 29.

[2] A native of Ireland who came to Kaskaskia in 1784. His sympathies were with the Americans during the Revolution and he was awarded compensation by Congress for the losses he suffered for his attachment to the American cause. After his arrival in the Illinois country he sided with the French in their difficulties with the American settlers of the John Dodge type. A prosperous merchant and trader, he built a handsome home in Kaskaskia. Alvord (ed.), *Kaskaskia Papers,* p. 376n; James H. Roberts, "The Life and Times of General John Edgar," in Illinois State Historical Society *Transactions,* 1907 (Springfield, 1908), pp. 64-73. See below, October 3, for Edgar's proposition to supply the soldiers asked for in this petition.

[3] This petition was enclosed in Hamtramck's letter to Harmar, November 2, 1789.

[4] For the decline of Kaskaskia, see above, pp. 146, 158.

Thus situated our last resource is to you sir, hoping and praying that you will so far use your authority, to save an almost deserted country from destruction, as to order or procure the small number of twenty men with an officer to be stationed among us for our defonce; and that you will make order for the establishment of a civil court to take place immediately and to continue in force untill the pleasure of His Excellency the Governor shall be known, and to whom we beg you would communicate our distress.

We beg your answer[5] by the return of the bearer, addressed to the Rev'd Mr. Le Dru our priest, who signs this, in the name and at the request of the inhabitants. Dated at Kaskaskias the fourteenth day of September 1789.

LEDRU curé des Kaskakias pour tous les
habitans francais de l'endroit et autres
voisins de la partie americaine

JOHN EDGAR

[Endorsed:] Petition from the people of Kaskaskias

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, September 23, 1789

[ALS]

FORT KNOX AT POST VINCENNES
Sept. 23d 1789

DEAR GENERAL Since I wrote you last nothing has happened. I have only to inform you that Capt. McCurdey's company arrived on the 19th inst. I inclose the return of his company by which you see his casualties. We lost one man the other day. He died in the hospital. He belongs to Bradford. I have the honor to be sir, with every sentiment of respect and esteem your most obedient and very humble servent,

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[5] See Hamtramck's reply, October 14, below.

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

I will be very much obliged to you if you will be pleased to present my respects to Mrs. Harmar.

J. F. H.

When you have done with your neuse papers I would be much oblig'd to you to send them to me.

[Endorsed:] Major John F. Hamtramck from Fort Knox at Post Vincennes, September 23d Answered January 13th 1789 [1790]

PROPOSITION OF JOHN EDGAR, October 3, 1789

[ADS]

A PETITION having been sent from the part of the inhabitants of Kaskaskias to Major Hamtramck,[1] praying for the number of twenty soldiers and an officer to be stationed among them. Now in order to further the said petition I do hereby promise to furnish barracks and provisions for the said number of troops, that is, flour, beef, pork, salt & rum, at the very lowest prices that each of the above articles sell for in the country, untill the arrival of the governor, or untill such time as provisions may be sent them by gouvernment and I do further promise to take bill of exchange on Congress or their officers appointed for that purpose in payment.

Witness my hand at Kaskaskias the 3d October 1789.

JOHN EDGAR

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[1] See above, September 14.

HAMTRAMCK TO FATHER JACOBIN LE DRU AND JOHN EDGAR, October 14, 1789[1]

[ACS]

POST VINCENNES Octob'r 14th 1789

GENTLEMAN, I have received your petition[2] and I am very sorry to see your country in so deplorable situation: I wish I had it in my power to give you an immediate relief—the unhealthy situation of the soldery is such that if I was to send you troops I would not have enough to do the necessary duty of the garrison, but I shall not loose a moment in sending your requisition to head quarters where your demand will be determined. I suppose that Mr. Vigo who I expect in December will bring you an answer perhaps with the troops you want. As for your civil department the people have my permission and indeed it is my wish, that two or three magistrates may be elected by the suffrages of the people in every villages to serve until the governor arrives. I mean that the authority of such magistrates shall extend to the enternal police of your country and prevent debtors from abscounding from their creditors, but my intentions are that for the present no execution shall take place in favor of a creditor, but as the people are daily moving on the Spanish side without paying their debts, it is my wish that against such people attachment may be granted, provided the plaintiff gives bond and security *and no otherwise.*

I hope these small regulations may afford you a temporary relief. Let your magistrates be respectable men by their moral character as well as in point of property. Let them attend with vigilance to all disputes that may arrise among you and in a particular maner to the Indian affairs.

I am your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. HAMTRAMCK, Major Comdt.

THE REVER'D MR. LEDRU AND MR. JOHN EDGAR

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[1] This was enclosed in Hamtramck's letter to Harmar, November 2, below.

[2] See above, September 14.

[Endorsed:] Copy of a letter to the people of Kaskaskias in answer to their petition.

HARMAR TO HAMTRAMCK, October 25, 1789

[Letterbook Copy]

FORT HARMAR, October 25th 1789

DEAR MAJOR, My last letter to you was dated on the 21st ult. [August] and forwarded from hence by Captain MacCurdy, who with his company I hope has long since arrived safe at Post Vincennes. I shall now particularly reply to your several letters of the 28th November, the 19th January, the 28 February [March], the 26th March,[1] the 11th April, the 15th June, the 29th July, & the 14th & 17th August last.

I fully agree with you in sentiment that Congress would have no great objection (at least I think they ought not to have any) to give power to Governor St. Clair to grant the officers of the present regiment their several proportions of land for their services during the late war in such places as they would chuse to have it. We may without vanity say that the officers are deserving of such indulgence, and when the Governor arrives I shall endeavour to have this business accomplished.[2] From the samples of copper & lead which you have sent me and your knowledge of mines & salt licks it would certainly be most advantageous for us to have our lands granted in *that part* of the country where these mines & licks are & in one body. Enclosed you will receive a copy of the resolve of Congress of October 22nd 1787, relative to the army lands, which you desired me to send you.[3]

By the enclosed copy of a letter from the County Lieutenant of Mason County in Kentucky to me,[4] you will observe how he complains of the disorderly proceedings of Captain McCurdy's company, in plundering the inhabitants at Limestone, on their passage down the Ohio River;[5] I have answered him, if his representation is just, the offenders shall certainly be severely punished. You will please to make the necessary enquiry into this matter, and report to me accordingly.

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[1] No letter of March 26 from Hamtramck to Harmar has been found.

[2] See above, pp. 141-42.

[3] This resolution is quoted above, p. 57n.

[4] The original is in the Harmar Papers.

I have already forwarded to the War Office extracts of your several letters of the 29th July, & the 14th, and 17th August, wherein it will be observed that the authority of the United States is disregarded by unauthorized expeditions taking place from Kentucky against the Wabash Indians. I have mentioned to General Knox the disagreeable & mortifying situation in which you are placed, & have requested particular & explicit directions from him how to act in such cases. The Governor is daily expected; you must conduct yourself according to the best of your judgement until his arrival, when the burden of all civil matters will be taken off your hands, and affairs I hope will wear a quite different aspect in your quarter.

A treaty with the southern Indians (the Creeks & Cherokees) is on the carpet; the commissioners appointed are General Lincoln, Mr. Cyrus Griffin, and Colonel Humphreys.[6] They have already sailed for Savanah, & Captain Burbeck[7] with 50 men attends them for the purpose.

Captain Beatty writes me that he hopes to arrive at Fort Pitt against the 1st November, tolerably well laden with cash & bills, so that we may shortly be looking for him. Col. Hamilton[8] is appointed financier, & Mr. Duer[9] his assistant. Mr. Denny by my directions now sends you the whole of the latest news-papers, which have come to hand, by which you will be made acquainted with the proceedings of government. I understand that another Captain of Infantry is to be appointed, & the whole corps (Artillery & Infantry) to be shortly filled up, which will render us a little more respectable.

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[5] Col. Henry Lee. For this affair involving Captain McCurdy and his company see below, pp. 208-9n, 215, 250.

[6] No treaty with the Creeks and Cherokees was concluded at this time.

[7] Capt. Henry Burbeck, of Massachusetts.

[8] Alexander Hamilton, secretary of the treasury.

[9] William Duer. See below, p. 271n.

Lieutenant Armstrong certainly deserves great credit for his vigilance & attention in escorting the provisions up the Wabash; and in my opinion you acted right in heading the villagers & proceeding to his assistance; but you are well convinced that instances of commanding officers leaving their garrisons should be rare, excepting in such cases as the present, where there was an unavoidable necessity.[10]

From head quarters I shall endeavour to forward the articles you write for, viz't clothing for your private servant, a book for the muster & inspection, powder & lead, the Articles of War, and some orderly books. I shall wait for Beatty's arrival here; at the same time I expect Major Wyllys, and shall then fix myself opposite Licking River.[11] By Captain McCurdy you will receive medecine, bark in particular, & a considerably quantity of it.

The corporal[12] who deserted from his guard and was brought in & delivered up by the Weeas, had better be tried by a General Court Martial. His crime is such a nature as to merit death.

The different Indian intelligence &c, which you have transmitted me is perfectly satisfactory. I have the fullest confidence that your judgement will be such as to conduct in the best manner possible until we hear from Governor St. Clair, when as I observed before, matters will (I hope) wear a more favorable aspect.

Respecting the freedom of the Negroes, whether it is to be from the date of the Ordinance of Congress, or from the time it is published in the district I cannot pretend to determine. I have requested Major Sargent's[13] sentiments upon the subject, and he is of opinion "that unless the Ordinance has been sent to the countries *by authority,* it *cannot* be in *force* at present."[14] The Major desires me to offer you his best regard & has sent for you the Ordinance of Congress for the government of the Western Territory, which I now enclose.

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[10] See above, Hamtramck to Harmar, July 29.

[11] At Fort Washington, located directly opposite the mouth of Licking River at the site of Cincinnati, built by Major John Doughty in the fall of 1789. Harmar took up headquarters there December 27 or 28, 1789.

[12] Cpl. David Core.

[13] Winthrop Sargent, secretary, and, as St. Clair's deputy, acting governor of the Northwest Territory. Sargent was appointed a surveyor in the Seven Ranges in Ohio, and was co-founder of the Ohio Company of

I am, Dear Major, with great esteem & regard your h'ble serv't,

Jos. Harmar
Lt. Col. Com. 1st U. S. Reg't.

Major John F. Hamtramck Commanding Officer at Fort Knox Post Vincennes

P. S. The boat called the Governor's barge which Captain McCurdy embarked in, you will please to return by the first convenient opportunity to head quarters J. H.

[Marginal note:] Favored pr Mr. Wm. Patterson in a canoe, enclosed to Captain Ashton in a few lines, of which I have not kept a copy.

John Edgar[1] to Hamtramck, October 28, 1789[2]

[LS]

Sir, Ducoigne[3] arrived last night, by whom I had the honor of yours of the 17th instant, together with your approbation

Associates. See above, p. 88n. He became governor of Mississippi Territory in 1798. Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers,* II, 61n.

[14] See above, pp. 160n-61n, for a note on the slavery question.

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[1] For note on Edgar see above, p. 190n.

[2] Hamtramck enclosed this in his letter to Harmar, November 11, 1789, below.

[3] Jean Baptiste Du Coigne, a Kaskaskia chief. St. Clair met him when he was at Kaskaskia and wrote to Secretary of War Knox on May 1, 1790: "Baptiste Du Coigne, whom you may remember with the Marquis de La Fayette, is the chief of the Kaskaskia nation, and settled in Kaskaskia. I have been plagued with a great many of his talks. This nation is very inconsiderable, and I do not think it is necessary to trouble you with them at present: He himself is the greatest beggar I have met with among nations who are all beggars. He counts no little upon his having been with the American troops in Virginia, and so far he merits some countenance." Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 139. A speech which St. Clair delivered to Du Coigne is given in *ibid.,* II, 141-44n.

of the inhabitants making a court by election and performing the duties therein required; but alas, sir, our unhappy situation is such that your good intentions cannot I am fearful meet with that success which the justice of them merits. Without some small force to support a civil authority, it is in vain to expect an obedience to any regulation however salutary, in a place where every one thinks himself master & where there is not the least degree of subordination. You know better than me the dispositions of a people who have ever been subject to a military power are unacquainted with the blessings of a free government by the voice of their equals. To the commands of a superior there are no people readier to obey, but without a superior there are none more difficult to be governed. I shall however do my endeavor to have your orders obeyed, but if I shall not be successful be assured that it will not be without the strongest efforts on my part.

Since my last at the departure of Ducoigne the several incidents mentioned in the inclosed depositions arrived in this place, wherein an attempt has been made to steal my property & slaves, and the life of my wife as well as that Mr. Jones[4] was in the most imminent danger. In consequence whereof the inclosed No. 1 was wrote the commandant of St. Genevieve who returned the answer No. 2. After which in consequence of information received the letter also inclosed No. 3 was wrote him, as was also the letter No. 4, in consequence of the discovery made by the Indians; to both these last letters we have received no answers, and I am apprehensive that the promise contained in the letter of the commanding officer will not be complied with, as we have not yet heard of anything being done therein.[5]

[4] John Rice Jones. See his letter to Hamtramck immediately below.

[5] These depositions and exchange of correspondence between John Edgar, John Rice Jones, and François Carbonneaux, citizens of Kaskaskia, and the Spanish commandant at Ste. Genevieve, Don Peyroux de la Coudrienne, are in the Harmar Papers. The Kaskaskians accused John Dodge, Michael Antaya, and Michael Duff, who was then living across the Mississippi in Spanish territory, of conspiring with a group of

Every day are we threaten'd with being murdered & having our houses & village burnt, the Piankashaws steal our horses & take them to the Spanish side where they live and where we dare not, even allowing we had sufficient forces, follow them, so that truly speaking our situation is desperate & even pitiful. These Indians have hatred enough to the Americans without being pushed on by white men, for this reason I am fearful of Ducoigne's life this winter, as the Piankashaws threaten hard because he is a friend to America.

It is well known that the minds of the Indians are continually poisoned by the traders on the other side, who set off America in the most despicable light possible which has not a small influence with the Indians. Gouvernment may not encourage it but surely if friends to us they ought to put a stop to it.

The next spring it is impossible I can stand my ground, surrounded as we are by savage enemies. I have waited five years in hopes of a government, I shall still wait until March, as I may be able to withstand them in the winter season, but if no succour nor gouvernment should then arrive I shall be compelled to abandon the country, & I shall go to live to St. Louis. Inclination, interest & love for the country prompts me to reside here, but when in so doing, it is ten to one but both my life & property will fall a sacrifice, you nor no impartial mind can blame me for the party I shall take.

If you could consistent with your duty & character write to the commanding officer of St. Louis it will have a very good effect, and will in a great measure add to our safety.

Piankashaw Indians to prey upon the Americans in Kaskaskia, particularly Jones and Edgar, burn their property, steal their slaves, and commit other acts of depredation. Apparently two Piankashaw testified that they had been ordered to set fire to Edgar's house and kill everyone living there. The Indians had been told that as Edgar was not even an American, but a Royalist, they had nothing to fear in killing him. The enmity between Dodge and Jones was of long standing. See above, p. 190n. Hamtramck forwarded these depositions and letters to Harmar in his letter of November 11, below.

I send by Richard a hoghead of cider & a barrel of apples agreeable to your request which I beg your acceptance of. I am only sorry the cider is not better, tho' it is the best I had made this year.

I am, sir, your most obedient & very humble servant,

JOHN EDGAR

KASKASKIAS 28 October 1789

Duff[6] when he went off owed & still owes me above 800 dollars.

JOHN RICE JONES TO HAMTRAMCK, October 29, 1789[1]

[LS]

SIR, I received the honor of yours of the 14 instant[2] by Ducoigne, who arrived the 27th at night, and who on his way hither crossed a trail fresh made by a large party of Kikapoos for war, making towards the Ohio.

Your answer to the petition sent you by Mr. Ledru & Mr. Edgar, was opened by the latter, in the absence and by the permission of the former, who unable to reside in a country of anarchy, and (I believe) the most miserable in America, has accepted of the Curé of St. Louis, to which place he is gone and will take possession on the 1st of next month. He has often declared to me that he would not remove from this side, even after St. Louis was offered him, but when he came to receive his tythes, which ought to furnish him with necessaries untill the ensuing crop, he found that he had not wherewith to support him two months, as the most part of the inhabitants have refused to pay him, so that he was in a manner compelled to accept of the offer made him. He met with no better usage than Mr. Delavaliniere & Mr. Gibault[3] before him did, and I am well persuaded that any other priest will not find a better reception untill the establishment of a gouvornment. Mr. St.

[6] Michael Duff.

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[1] This letter was enclosed in Hamtramck's letter to Harmar, November 11, below.

[2] Not found.

[3] See notes on these priests above, p. 61n.

Pierre the priest of Kaho is now priest of St. Genevieve,[4] and I am informed that Mr. Gibault is to have the offer of the Curé of L'Anse a la Graisse, where there is a commanding officer & 20 soldiers newly arrived from Orleans. Col. Geo. Morgan has met with a very cavalier reception at Orleans, where he has been treated as a projector, and the governor told him that if he had an inclination to come as a settler, it was well, but for any other prospect he need not expect it. The boasted settlement of New Madrid is almost broke up & the few remnant saved from death, tho' after a long summer's sickness are about to evacuate.[5]

[4] Father Paul de St. Pierre. He came to Kaskaskia in July, 1785, later moving to the more peaceful Cahokia where he remained until 1789 when he went to Ste. Genevieve. Alvord (ed.), *Kaskaskia Papers,* pp. xxxv-xxxvii.

[5] Morgan had carried on his negotiations relative to New Madrid with Diego de Gardoqui, the Spanish minister to the United States. After launching his colony, he proceeded to New Orleans for conversations with Governor Esteban Miró. The latter and Gardoqui differed in their interpretations of Spanish policy as outlined in Madrid. Miró was more cautious in opening the province to American settlers; Gardoqui went along wholeheartedly with Morgan's scheme. Also Miró was influenced by the schemes of James Wilkinson for separation of Kentucky from the East. He rebuked Morgan for what he regarded as his overzealousness and unauthorized conduct, but did seem impressed with his ideas and ability. Morgan did not return to New Madrid after visiting New Orleans, abandoning this project for other interests. Savelle, *George Morgan Colony Builder,* pp. 215 ff.

The settlement did not flourish. On May 30, 1789, a writer for the Lexington *Kentucky Gazette* declared that the country about New Madrid "by no means answers the description given of it by Col. Morgan in his advertisement . . . is now all under water, by the overflowing of that river [the Mississippi], except some inconsiderable heights or pine knobs. The most of those who have gone to settle there are dissatisfied, and numbers have already gone down to the Natchez, and it is thought they will all abandon the place in a short time. There is every reason to believe, when the water subsides that that place will prove sickly. . . ." Nevertheless, a few new families continued to come, especially French from Vincennes and the settlements in Illinois, and also a number of Indians. Savelle, *op. cit.,* p. 227. On April 12, 1791, Hamtramck wrote to Winthrop Sargent: "Antoine Gamelin who was judge of Probate is gone to l'Ance a la Graise on the Spanish side. There is about 250 souls who have gone before him for the same place." Sargent Collection, Massachusetts Historical Society. See also Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers,* III, 356.

Mr. Edgar has wrote inclosing the depositions of the several acts of violence committed about midnight of the 8th of this instant by Dodge, Antaya & others, Spanish subjects, accompanied by Indians armed who in a country where there was the least shadow of justice would meet with a very exemplary punishment. But we are subject to every insult and danger that can be made use of, and we must suffer in silence, as we have no commanding officer to lay forth our complaints before the commanders on the other side, and the remonstrances of private individuals (notwithstanding the specious answers given) will not meet with that attention which the circumstances of the case require & demand.

Every efforts are made use of by the Spanish gouvernment to depopulate this side; one step towards it is taking their priests from them, well knowing that the people will not remain where there are no pastors. You may rest assured that these are their intentions, for Mr. Chouteau,[6] one of the most capital merchants on the Spanish side, informed Mr. Edgar last spring in my presence, that orders had been received from Orleans by the Lieut. Govr. of St. Louis for him to make every difficulty possible with the people of this side, so that they might thereby be forced to go to live on the other. Several proposals have been made Mr. Edgar such as lands gratis, no taxes, with free permission to work at the lead mines & salt springs; all these he has refused; but if by March next no gouvernment or regulation arrives, he will remove to St. Louis where his life & property will be in safety, and with him take my word will this village be effectually ruined as a settlement.

For near three weeks we have kept a constant guard both night & day, for fear of the menaces of the Indians, inticed by the white men being put into execution. Indeed we know not when there is danger, as every person almost that comes from Misere [Ste. Genevieve] and St. Louis bring us accounts & letters, that we are to be massacred in the village, sometimes by the Delawares & Shawnese with the Piankashaws & at other times by the Sacs & Renards, who in seeking for Ducoigne, will kill the Americans as his friends, tho' for my part I believe that most of these stories are fabricated on the other side on purpose to frighten us away, seeing no other plan has had the desired effect.

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[6] Auguste Chouteau.

The English lord that lately came from Michilinimackinak & visited St. Louis & St. Genevieve & is since gone down the Mississipi to Orleans on his way home, is Lord Edward Fitzgerald, a younger brother of the Duke of Leinster in Ireland & major of the 54th Reg't of foot now in Canada. He went up the Mississipi forty leagues above the Falls of St. Anthony, and held conferences with the Indians above as well as with the Shawnese & Delawares here. What the purport of his journey was we know not nor can conjecture. However one thing is certain, that he never visited the American villages on the Mississipi, which is rather extraordinary, if he was only on his travels for curiosity.[7]

We have just received the news from St. Louis that a no. of petty augurs from Michilinimackinak with English goods are stationed on the American shore opposite to the mouth of the Missouri, for the purpose of drawing down to them the trade of the Indians on that river. They say the no. is 24 petty augurs.

I have wrote a long letter, perhaps it may be disagreeable & tire your patience; if s[o] or the liberty I take in sending you the occurrences of this country, should not meet [with] your approbation, I would thank you to inform me, that I may not hereafter unwillingly offend.

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[7] The sketch of Lord Fitzgerald (1763-1798) in the *Dictionary of National Biography,* gives a spirit of adventure as the only incentive for this trip. "Infected by the fashionable Rousseau admiration for savage life, Fitzgerald made his way by compass through the woods from Frederickton [New Brunswick] to Quebec, was formally admitted at Detroit into the Bear tribe, and went down the Mississippi to New Orleans." He returned shortly thereafter to England. Volume XIX (New York and London, 1889), 110.

I am with the greatest respect, sir, your most obedient & very humble servant,

JOHN RICE JONES

KASKASKIAS 29th October 1789

If you have any spare newspapers you will oblige Mr. Edgar & me in sending them. Mr. Chouteau told Mr. Barbau[8] that there will be 600 soldiers next spring at St. Louis.

[Addressed:] Major Hamtramck commandant Post Vincennes

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, November 2, 1789

[LS]

POSTE VINCENNES Nov'r 2nd 1789

DEAR GENERAL The determination of the dates of inlistment of Bradford's company has caused so great an uneasiness with McCurdy's and Smith's companys, that I have kept their last muster rolls untill I heard from you. If you thought proper to permit their reinlistments to commence from their new inlistment, I imagine it would be good policy, for it might happen that at the conclusion of the three years, these men by being detatched, would refuse to serve, and put an officer in a very disagreeable situation. It is with submission I give you my opinion, and I hope you will take it as such.[1]

I have now to lay before you a matter of the last importance to the garrison, which is that last spring we were obliged to live on corn bread for a considerable time, owing to the difficulty of obtaining flour from above at that season of the year. Should this difficulty exist the next spring, the means of obtaining corn from the village would be out of the question, for there is not grain enough in the village to serve the inhabitants longer than the first of March. The quantity of flour on hand this day will serve the present garrison untill the first of December and no longer. As for meat there is not

[8] Probably Jean Baptiste Barbau, a prominent citizen of Prairie du Rocher. Alvord (ed.), *Cahokia Records,* pp. lvi, cxxxii.

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[1] For reply to this see Harmar to Hamtramck, January 13, 1790, below.

an ounce in store, but the commissary informs me that he expects some on from the Falls, for which purpose I have directed Capt. Ashton to furnish an escort.

Ever since last summer I have been taken measures to divide the Weeyaw Indians and I am happy to inform you that I have so far succeeded, that a tribe of about eighty warriors have come under the protection of the United States and delivered me two white prisoners taken some time ago in Kentukey. How long this alliance will last, I know not, as I have nothing to encourage them with and they expect it.

I have the honor to enclose you a petition from the inhabitants of Kaskaskias, and a copy of my answer.[2] I also inclose a return of cloathing wanted in Capt. Smith's company, and a monthly return of the troops, the return of military stores for the inspection of July and also the returns of the last inspection. The troops were in very good order, the arms as well as the cloathing. As it is not improbable that the Minister at War will scold at the hospital expences I have been compelled to make, I will make my apology to you in time, who I hope will approve of my conduct. I had but two choices, to be guilty of murder, or to put the United States to some expence. The latter I adopted. The wine that has been drank has been consumed by those who must have died without it, and the sugar, tea, &c. were as necessary as the root of a tree is to its vegetation.

The Indians of the Kaskaskias have paid me another visit with new protestations of their fidelity.

Gibault has made his exit from this place for Kiokia, where he expects to make more money.[3] I will be much obliged to you to inform me wether the reward offered for deserters is to be taken from their pay or not.

I am dear general with every sentiments of respect and esteem your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. Hamtramck

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[2] See above, September 14 and October 14.

[3] See above, pp. 61n, 201.

Will you be so good as to present my respects to Mrs. Harmar and my compliments to the gent. of your garrison.

Capt. McCurdey is very sick.

[Addressed:] Brigadier Gen'l Harmar

[Endorsed:] Major John F. Hamtramck from Post Vincennes, November 2nd 1789. Answered January 13th, 1790.

Hamtramck to Harmar, November 11, 1789

[ALS]

Post Vincennes Novem'r 11th 1789

Dear General, Last evening I receiv'd a number of letters and papers from Kaskaskias which I have the honor to enclose;[1] some of them are in French which I would have translated had time permitted me, but the men were going of[f] this afternoon to the Falls, by whome this will be convey'd, and the length of the letters &c, obliges me to forward them as they stand. I shall write to the Spanish commandant in consequence of it.

It is high time that government should take place in this country, and if it should happen that the governor was not to come, nor any of the judges, I would beg (for the sake of the people) that His Excellency would give me certain powers to create magistrates, a sherif, and other officers for the purpose of establishing courts of justice, for at present there are none, owing to the daily expectation of the arrival of the governor. Those that had been appointed by the people last year, thier authority has been refused in the Courts of Kentuckey, they declaring that by the resolve of Congress, neither the people of Post Vincennes, or the commanding officer had a right to appoint magistrates, that the power was vested in the governor only, and that it was a usurp'd authority. You see, sir, how much to the prejudice of the people their present situation is, and how necessary it is that some steps should be taken to relieve them.

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[1] See above, pp. 197-200, 200-4.

The powers of the magistrates may be circumscrib'd as His Excellency may think proper but the necessity of having such characters will appear when I assure you that at present no person here can administer an oath which will be consider'd legal in the courts of Kentuckey, and for the reasons above mentioned.

I am, Dear General, with every sentiment of respect and esteem your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

[Addressed:] Brig'r Gener. Harmar

[Endorsed:] Major John Francis Hamtramck from Post Vincennes November 11th, 1789. Answered January 13th 1790.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, November 26, 1789

[ALS]

POST VINCENNES Nov. 26th 1789

DEAR GENERAL, I am sorry that I must take my pen on so disagreable subject which is, that on the 23d Inst. I had occasion to send down the river a small detachment under the command of Serjeant Guest of Capt. McCurdey's company and about 12 miles down as they were rowing one Mich. Griff of McCurdey's company (who it is sayd was intoxicated and lying on the fore castel) took a gun and shot dead the serjeant who was then steering the boat.[1]

On the examination that I have made it appears to me that no sort of provication was given, for the serjeant was not then speaking to Griff, but was talking to two men who had some words about rowing. I have the murderer in prison and will keep him so until I have the honor of receiving your direction.

I will be very much oblig'd to you if you will send me all the Gazettes you can.

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[1] The two men involved were Sergt. Albion Guest and Michael Graff. See below August 25, 1790.

I have the honor to be, sir, with every sentiments of respect and esteem your most obedient and very humble servent

J. F. Hamtramck

[Endorsed:] Major John F. Hamtramck from Post Vincennes, November 26th 1789. Answered January 13th, 1790.

[Enclosure][1]

FEDERAL TERRITORY NORTHWEST OF THE OHIO RIVER

L: S:

Whereas Lewis Weitsel charged with an assault upon and wounding and maiming of George Washington an Indian[2] in Alliance & friendship with the United States, lately made his escape from the custody of the United States Guard at Fort Harmar, and being retaken into custody at Limestone in the District of Kentucky by Serg't John Lalor and Patrick Delany of the United States troops under the command of Capt. McCurdy, and by Capt. McCurdy this day rendered in custody to the subscriber one of the judges of the Feoderal Territory.[3]

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[1] This is apparently a copy of the document given Capt. McCurdy by Judge Symmes. For Harmar's reference to this affair see his letter to Hamtramck, above, October 25.

[2] Que-shaw-sey, a Delaware chief. "This George Washington," wrote Harmar to Secretary of War Knox, "is a trusty confidential Indian, and was wounded by some vagabond whites from the neighborhood of Wheeling. He is well known to Governor St. Clair, and I believe there is not a better Indian to be found. The villain who wounded him I am informed is one Lewis Whitzell. I am in hopes to be able to apprehend him and deliver him to Judge Parsons to be dealt with; but would much rather have it in my power to order such vagabonds hanged up immediately without trial." Harmar added that he had sent some flour to the Indian and invited him to come to the garrison and have the doctor examine his wound. Letter of July 9, 1791, Harmar Papers.

[3] Wetzel's arrest by McCurdy's men—the arrest of a civilian by the military—caused a storm of protest in Kentucky. In the September 26, 1789, issue of *The Kentucky Gazette* published at Lexington, was printed a letter to the editor dated September 10, which read in part: "Then know Kentuckians, that a free citizen of our country, in the house of his friend, in the peaceable pursuit of his business, is seized by a military officer at the head

These are therefore to certify that the said Lewis Wietsel, charged as aforesaid at the suit of the United States, has been in due form of law and agreeable to the proclamation and process issued for his apprehension by the Hon'ble Judge Parsons of the said Feoderal Territory delivered to the custody of the civil authority by Capt. McCurdy.

Given under my hand at Northbend this 26th day of August 1789

Sign'd JOHN CLEVES SYMMES

The above is a true copy of the original

JOHN ELLIOT

of his soldiers, taken into custody, confined and hurried, where?—to a magistrate—to a court of justice— or to any tribunal qualified to examine him. . . . ? No; but out of your country—out of the reach of your laws—away from his friends, into a military garrison."

In the *Gazette* of October 24, there appeared a letter from Henry Lee, county lieutenant of Mason County who, too, apparently felt that military authority had defied the civil. By his account the seventy men under McCurdy were given permission to visit Limestone when their boats reached that point. They behaved quite boisterously, stealing baked goods, plundering gardens, etc., and carried off considerable loot. (Plundering was later flatly denied by the men. See below, p. 210n.) "About day light a sergeant and six men entered the house of one John Young, and forcibly seized a certain Lewis Witzel (who in attempting to defend himself from their Violence, wounded one of them in the hand,) and dragging him by the hair down to the bank, to one of their boats, they confined him therein, and finally carried him away. . . ." Lee then went down to Fort Washington where Major Doughty was commanding. Doughty explained to Lee that Wetzel had been accused of the murder of an Indian, but that the Indian had recovered and the only witness against Wetzel had left the country. Doughty added that Wetzel had originally been arrested by Judge Parsons and for want of a jail had been confined at the garrison from which he escaped. Doughty had instructed McCurdy to deliver Wetzel to Judge Symmes which he had done, and subsequently Wetzel had been released. McCurdy, who had proceeded on to Vincennes, had told Judge Symmes that he, McCurdy, had in his possession $22.50 belonging to Wetzel for which he declared himself answerable. He disclaimed knowledge of the twenty-eight guineas which Wetzel said he also had had when arrested. Lee felt that McCurdy and his men had exceeded their authority and demanded McCurdy's arrest and trial. See below, pp. 215, 218-19, 232, 250.

Hamtramck to Harmar, December 3, 1789

[ALS]

Fort Knox at Poste Vincennes
Decembr. 3d 1789

Dear General I have received your letter of the 25th of October. I have the honor to inclose you the return of ordanance of the 1st of October last. The reason why it was not sent before was owing to Capt. Bradford sickness. Agreably to your request I have had an enquiry made about Capt. McCurdey. The Proceedings are enclosed.[1] The boat will be return by the first opportunity, but we have not one for the garrison which is much wanted. Since I had the honor of writing you last nothing extraordinary has happened except that Capt. Bradford has had a male heir on the 1st Decembr.

I am sir with very great respect your O. S.

J. F. Hamtramck

The Secretary of War to Harmar, December 19, 1789

[LS]

War Office December 19, 1789

Sir,

. . . .

You will have found by my letter of the 29th of October that provision was made on the subject of expeditions into the Indian country, the propriety thereof being referred conjointly to the Governor of the western territory, and you as the commanding officer of the federal troops.

Since writing the said letter of the 29th of October the President of the United States has received letters from several of the principal characters of Kentuckey on the subject of Indian depredations. While he has given them assurances of protection as far as shall be consistent with his general duty, he has directed me to deliver his sentiments to Samuel McDowell Esq'r of Danville, chairman of a committee chosen by the late convention of that district upon the subject of Indian expeditions of which the following is an extract.

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[1] The manuscript proceedings of this court of inquiry, dated November 29, 1789, is in the Harmar Papers. In it any plunder by the men under McCurdy at Limestone is flatly denied. See above, pp. 208-9, and note.

"The President of the United States has desired that it may be clearly understood to be his opinion that the best foundation for peace with the Indians is by establishing just and liberal treaties with them, which shall be rigidly observed on our parts, and if broken on theirs to be *effectually* punished by legal authority.

"But irregular, and unauthorised expeditions involve the innocent and guilty in equal calamity, make enemies of those disposed to be friends, disgrace government, and defeat its designs. And further that in future it is his just expectation that no expedition be undertaken against the Indians north west of the Ohio, but with the approbation of the Governor of the said Territory, and the commanding officer of the federal troops, who are particularly instructed on this subject."

This statement will enable you to form your judgement on the subject.

Were the Wabash Indians once quieted by a general treaty with them, the business in future would be clear and easy. For if any particular tribe, or a banditti from a number of tribes, should violate the treaty and commit outrages, the principles of justice and even humanity, would urge a severe punishment in terror to others. But in the present confused state of injuries between the said Indians and the frontier people south of the Ohio, it is extremely difficult, nay impossible for an impartial mind to decide which party is right, or which wrong.

Hence it would appear that a general treaty with the Wabash Indians is a requisite preliminary to almost any measures of government. If an invitation be made for peace and they should refuse, and still continue their depredations, the difficulties which at present exist, will be obviated, and chastisement must follow.

I state these circumstances in order that no measures should be adopted that would militate with a treaty which undoubtedly will be attempted by the governor, either in consequence of former instructions or others that he will now receive.[1]

I thank you for the transmission of the regulations instituted at New Madrid by Colonel Morgan.[2] Watch attentively the progress of that place from time to time and report every thing relative thereto that you may be able to obtain.

Endeavor by all possible means to ascertain the truth of the report given to you by Major Hamtramck respecting the British troops removing from the post of Detroit to the north side, and if the intention should be so, let me know as early as possible the precise time when it will take place.

……

As it will be proper that your field officers be furnished with maps, I send you three of McMurray's maps of the United States, and three of Hutchings' maps of the western country.

……

Major Hamtramck complains of his irregular supplies of provisions, pray have this evil remedied, by directing the contractors always to have three months' stock on hand at Fort Knox, of salt provisions, and flour, indeed this ought to be the case at all the garrisons, agreably to my former ideas on the subject—posts so distant as yours are, and in the neighborhood of Indians whose conceptions of the faith of treaties cannot be very strong, ought always to possess resources within themselves for their defence. Let this therefore be the rule of your conduct, and constrain the contractors to furnish the necessary magazines equal to three months consumption, independent of the current issues.

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[1] On October 6, 1789, the President wrote Governor St. Clair directing him to determine the disposition of the Indians of the Wabash, whether it would be possible to establish peace with them by treaty, or whether it would be necessary to resort to war to secure a safe frontier. Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 125-26.

[2] A manuscript copy of these regulations is in the Harmar Papers, under date of April 6, 1789.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, Sir, your most obedient servant,

H. KNOX

BRIGADIER GENERAL JOSIAH HARMER

[Addressed:] Brigadier General Josiah Harmer Head Quarters Ohio

[Endorsed:] The honorable Major General Knox, War Office, December 19th 1789. Answered February 20th 1790

HARMAR TO HAMTRAMCK, January 13, 1790

[Letterbook Copy]

HEAD QUARTERS, FORT WASHINGTON
January 13th 1790

DEAR MAJOR, I had the pleasure of addressing you on the 25th October last, which I hope arrived safe. I now have to acknowledge the receipt of your several letters of the 4th & 23d Sept. the 2d & 11th November with the enclosures from Kaskaskias, & the 26th November, to all which I shall particularly reply.

The Governor has at length arrived;[1] he left this post on the 5th instant for the Illinois Country. I granted him an escort of 50 chosen men under the immediate command of Lt. Doyle for his security. Major Wyllys accompanies him, and as it is your wish to have leave of absence in the Spring, I have directed the Major to relieve you. You are at liberty therefore to proceed hither immediately upon Major Wyllys' arrival at Post Vincennes. The Governor's presence will ease you of a variety of business, which did not properly belong to the military department.

I wrote to you long since concerning the enlistments of Bradford's company, that what was promised to the men should be performed—they are to be mustered from the time of their new enlistments, and not from the expiration of their former service. You will please to regulate matters accordingly. As for McCurdy's & Smith's men, nothing was promised them on this head; therefore they are to serve out their three years.

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[1] St. Clair arrived at Fort Washington on January 2. Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 129.

Respecting provisions, the contractor himself Mr. Elliott has gone forward for your post; he has given me the strongest assurances, that he will make such arrangements that all the posts shall be abundantly supplied. I am very happy to hear that from the measures you have taken you have so far succeeded as to divide the Weea Indians and that 80 of their warriors have come under the protection of the United States. This will be highly pleasing to the Governor. The petition from the inhabitants of Kaskaskias together with all the French papers &c &c which you transmitted me were laid before him for his perusal and consideration.

Captain Beatty takes on with him the clothing for Smith's company, & Lt. Peters will deliver you your new commission, & commissions for the rest of the officers at Post Vincennes.[2] Beatty has made a glorious settlement for the regiment; he will inform you of the particulars. You will muster & inspect the troops under your command up to the 31st December 1789 inclusive, & do not detain Beatty. I shall expect his return here sometime in the latter end of April or beginning of May next. The boat called the Governor's barge we stand in great need of; send it as early as possible to head quarters.

The officers & men are to take the oath before you agreeably to the enclosed form, & each man is to subscribe the same. A roll is to be made out as in case of a muster. It will be necessary that you take the oath yourself before the Governor or Major Wyllys previous to your entering upon this business.

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[2] Commissions in the Army of the United States under the Act of Congress of September 29, 1789, which recognized the army as established under the Confederation and prescribed the oath to be taken by all the officers and privates. U. S. *Statutes at Large,* I, 95-96.

The Minister at War as you observe will scold indeed at the expence of hospital stores, but I know the absolute necessity for them at Post Vincennes. *Oeconomy* is the point of view which you must always display on, not only in this respect, but in every other. My last letter from the War Office recommends a stoppage of so many cents from the soldiers, in order to furnish hospital stores, but I cannot think of proposing it, as it certainly will not be relished by the men.[3] As for the villain Graff who murdered Serjeant Guest you will order a General Court Martial for his trial, & transmit me the proceedings. I shall use my best endeavors to have him hanged.

In my letter of the 25th October I enclosed you a copy of a letter received from Colonel Henry Lee the County Lieutenant of Mason County, relative to the riotous & disorderly proceedings of Captain McCurdy, and his company. All Kentucky is in an uproar about it. I am informed that they have advertized McCurdy in the Public Gazette upon the occasion. I have since received another letter from the County Lieutenant, who seems determined to prosecute the matter. Certain it is the regiment has been considerably disgraced by such conduct in the eyes of the people. You will therefore order Captain McCurdy under arrest, & to repair to head quarters in the Spring with his evidences, for to receive his trial.[4]

If Ensign Pryor is still desirous of a furlough, enclosed is one for that purpose; you will please to fill up the time yourself.

There is one Walker of Captain Bradford's company, a tinman, Captain Ferguson informs me that he cannot do without one in his department; you will therefore order him to repair to head quarters.

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[3] On October 29, Knox wrote Harmar, "I am apprehensive that considering the high pay the public will not conceive they are under obligations to do it [make provisions for hospitals and care of the sick] considering the general opinion that the soldiers receive great pay and emoluments. On the whole I am of the opinion that a fund ought to be formed out of the soldiers for this object. . . . I do not conceive that this arrangement could be made but by the consent of the soldiers themselves. . . . If this should not be done by the consent of the soldiers, it is possible that it may be enacted in some future law respecting the troops." Harmar Papers.

[4] See above, pp. 208-9n, and below, pp. 218-19, 250.

Beatty will inform you respecting the reward for deserters, how it is to be paid. I have given him the latest news papers, which he will deliver to you.

Enclosed is a letter for the Governor, which you will please to forward to him. I shall expect you in the Spring if you still continue in the sentiment of going to the Eastward. I wish you to ascertain the precise distances of the Wabash, viz. how far is it from Post Vincennes to the Miami village, and what sort of a navigation does the Wabash afford? How far from thence to the communication with the Lake &c &c? and transmit me the result of your enquiries.[5]

I am, Dear Major, with every sentiment of esteem & regard your most obed't serv't,

Jos. Harmar
Lt. Col. Com. 1st U. S. Reg't.

Major Hamtramck Com. Officer at Fort Knox at Post Vincennes

[Marginal note:] favored pr Mr. Vigo

Hamtramck to Harmar, January 16, 1790

[ALS]

Fort Knox at Post Vincennes
Jan'y 16th 1790

Dear General, Although I have no newse to inform you with, I am happy to have an early opportunity to wish you and Mrs. Harmar an happy New Year.

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[5] See below, pp. 225-27. President Washington wrote to St. Clair on October 6, 1789: "As it may be of high importance to obtain a precise and accurate knowledge of the several waters which empty into the Ohio on the north-west, and of those which discharge themselves into the Lakes Erie and Michigan, the length of the portages between, and nature of the ground, an early and pointed attention thereto is earnestly recommended." Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 126.

I hope, my Dear Sir, that you may both see many, during which I sincerely wish that providence may take you by the hand and carry you to the sommet of your wishes.

We have but for ten days' provision and I have not heard of any boats comming. I can not consive the reason why the contractors have not profited of so fine a winter. The weather still remains good and the Wabash is in a fine order for boats.

I had some time ago requested leave of absence to go up the river. An unforeseen event will prevent me to go for this year so that I shall not want a furlough.[1]

I am, Dear General, with very great respect and esteem your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

BRIG. GEN'L HARMAR

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brig'r Genr. Harmar at the Miami

[Endorsed:] Major John F. Hamtramck from Fort Knox at Post Vincennes, January 16th 1790. Answered February 20th 1790

HARMAR TO CAPT. HENRY VANDERBURGH, January 23, 1790

[Letterbook Copy]

HEAD QUARTERS, FORT WASHINGTON
January 23d 1790

DEAR SIR, Your two letters dated the 28th November 1788, & the 30th March 1789,[1] have been received so long since, that I am apprehensive you will charge me with neglect in not acknowledging them before this time, but I have had such movements, and variety of business to attend to, that must plead my apology.

The disgust which Captain Ferguson took at your conduct whilst acting as commissary at Post Vincennes I cannot pre-

[1] Perhaps the reason Hamtramck changed his mind about going East was that he was contemplating matrimony. See below, pp. 256-57n.

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[1] Not found.

tend to say whether it was well founded or not. From the statement you have made me & Major Finly's certificate,[2] it does not appear that you acted with the least impropriety, but as Major Hamtramck was the Commanding Officer at the Post, I am surprized that if any irregularities were committed, that the matter was not represented to him.

The Governor of the Western Territory left this Post on the 5th Instant for the Illinois Country. Agreeably to a former request of yours, I mentioned to him your name, & wishes to be employed in some public office; I make not the least doubt but he will attend to any application you may make upon this head.[3]

I am, Dear Sir, with esteem your very h'ble serv't,

Jos. Harmar

Captain Henry Vanderburgh at Post Vincennes

[Marginal note:] Favored pr Major Doughty to the care of Captain Asheton & enclosed in his letter.

Harmar to Col. Henry Lee, January 23, 1790

[Letterbook Copy]

Head Quarters, Fort Washington
January 23rd, 1790

Sir, I have received your letter dated the 1st instant from Limestone, and have to inform you that I have already ordered Captain McCurdy in arrest, & to repair hither for his trial.[1] I

[2] Finley, the contractors' agent, certified: ". . . that on a statement of my acc'ts with Captain Henry Vanderburgh during the period of his acting as commissary at St. Vincennes every transaction relative to the issuing of provisions &c done by that gentleman, appeared perfectly just, and it furthur appeared from a fair & just statement of his accounts that he had disposed of only fifteen gallons of whiskey, ten of which he has paid me two dollars pr gallon for, & ten shillings pr gall. for the remainder which I believe was what he received it for." The certificate is dated January 15, 1789, at Louisville. Harmar Papers.

[3] See above, Harmar to Vanderburgh, August 7, 1788, and note.

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[1] See above, pp. 208-9n, 215, 219.

expect he will be here about the latter end of April, or sometime in the month of May next, but shall let you know the precise day of his arrival.

The representation which you have made me is of a very serious nature, and if the charges are supported, he ought to be dismissed the service. You wish to know what kind of evidence is necessary upon this occasion—deposition is entirely inadmissible unless by consent of both parties. The evidence must be therefore by *Viva Voce* as you term it, or face to face.

I am, Sir, your most humble serv't,

Jos. HARMAR

COLONEL HENRY LEE County Lieutenant for Mason County, Kentucky

[Marginal note:] Favored pr Capt. Strong's brother

HARMAR TO HAMTRAMCK, February 20, 1790

[Letterbook Copy]

HEAD QUARTERS, FORT WASHINGTON
February 20th 1790

DEAR MAJOR, I had the pleasure of addressing you last on the 13th ult. by Mr. Vigo; since which I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3rd December, enclosing the proceedings of the court of enquiry relative to the conduct of Captain McCurdy & his company at Limestone, & return of ordnance & military stores at Post Vincennes dated the 1st October last. The evidence of the court is all on one side, you will therefore order Capt. McCurdy to repair hitherto for his trial in the spring; as I mentioned in my letter by Mr. Vigo, that Colonel Lee seems inclined to prosecute the matter. Yours of the 16th ult. has also been received, wherein I observe you have given up your intentions of going to New York this year on furlough; in that case you will inform Major Wyllys upon his arrival at Post Vincennes (if you still continue in the sentiment of remaining there) that he is to return, & take his old command at the Rapids of the Ohio.

I now forward to Captain Asheton a copy of the contract entered into with Messrs. Elliott & Williams by the Secretary of the Treasury for provisions for the present year, as also a copy of the contract in the Quarter Master's department with directions for him to copy both of them, & send them on to you.

I find by the revision of the Articles of War, that General Courts Martial are to be ordered by the General, or officer commanding the troops. I therefore transmit you the enclosed order for that purpose, for the trial of the corporal that was brought in by the Weeas (his name is left blank, you will fill it up in the orders) & also for the trial of Graffe, who murdered Serjeant Guest. The proceedings when finished, are to be transmitted to me as early as possible.

If there should be any other map than McMurry's & Hutchins's with his pamphlet, which were enclosed in the packages transmitted to you by Mr. Vigo, you will please to deliver it to Lieut. Armstrong, whom I now dispatch upon particular business to Kaskaskias.[1]

[1] Armstrong was on a secret mission ordered by Secretary of War Knox. On December 20, 1789, Knox wrote Harmar a secret letter instructing him to "devise some practicable plan for exploring the branch of the Mississippi called the Missouri, up to its source and all its southern branches. . . ." Armstrong was chosen by Harmar to undertake the exploration of the Missouri provided Governor St. Clair, who was at Kaskaskia by this time, judged it advisable. Harmar regarded the assignment as difficult and hazardous. Armstrong was to go as a trader, with no indication that he was connected with the army. He proceeded westward via Vincennes and arrived at Kaskaskia March 28. He continued there, helping St. Clair bring in provisions to fill a serious lack of supplies in the Illinois villages. Finally, on May 1, the Governor pronounced the business Armstrong had been appointed to perform "for the present at least . . . impracticable." Armstrong then proceeded to St. Louis and Ste. Genevieve, picking up what information he could about the Missouri and the Indian trade and sent to Harmar a map of the country west of the Mississippi and one of the Illinois River and its connection with Lake Michigan, which he copied from ones found in St. Louis. All this was forwarded to Knox and President Washington. Colton Storm, "Lieutenant Armstrong's Expedition to the Missouri River, 1790," in *Mid-Amercia,* XXV (N. S. XIV), 180-88 (July, 1943), based on letters and documents in the Harmar Papers. Harmar's autograph letter to Armstrong, February 20, 1790, concerning this secret mission is in the John Armstrong Collection in possession of Charles F. Cochran of La Porte.

I am truly sorry to hear of the great scarcity of provisions with you, but all the posts are equally distressed in that respect. We have been on the point of starvation here ever since my arrival. Mr. Elliott promises fair; the present scarcity I am informed is owing to great quantities of provisions being bought up both at Pittsburgh & Kentucky by the merchants for the trade to New Orleans. I expect Mr. Elliott is with you before this time.

Continue to send me on regular monthly returns of the troops &c under your command, & let them be made out more intelligible; the last return had not your signature, and was scarcely legible.

If any occurrences worthy of observation should happen in your quarter, I shall expect the earliest information of them. I hope the Governor will be with you, against the arrival of this letter.

I am, Dear Major, with great esteem & regard your hum. serv't,

Jos. Harmar
Lt. Col. Com. 1st U. S. R.

Major John F. Hamtramck, Commanding Officer at Fort Knox at Post Vincennes.

P. S. I have directed Lieut. Armstrong to return to Head Quarters, after he has completed the business for which he is detached. You will therefore order a subaltern from Post Vincennes, to repair to the Rapids of the Ohio for the purpose of conducting escorts for the cattle &c &c, and to perform the duty which Lt. Armstrong has been so constantly employed upon, in going backwards & forwards to the Post. Lt. Peters appears to me to be the most suitable officer for this business.

Have the British troops removed from the Post of Detroit to the north side, or is it their intention?

J. H.

Major Hamtramck

[Marginal note:] Favored pr Lieut. Armstrong

Hamtramck to Harmar, March 17, 1790

[ALS]

Fort Knox at Post Vincennes
March the 17th 1790

Dear General, I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 13th of January last and of the 28th of February, the later by Lt. Armstrong who arrived the 15th instant.

In consequence of your order the 19th of March was the day appointed for the court to assemble for the tryal of the two prisoners.[1]

I have not yet arrested McCurdey.[2] The settlement of his company with Beatty has prevented me, but will do it as soon as the paymaster has done with him and will send him on to headquarters with Beatty.

Mr. Peters is gone to the Rapids of the Ohio agreably to your ordres.[3]

You have directed me to send on to head quarters the Governor barge which shall be done by Beatty when he gos up, but I must observe that the garrison will be without any. How we will do if we want to send an escort down the river, or how we are to get our wood I know not. If I am oblig'd to hire pirogues at 10 livers pr day it will soon amount to the price of half dozen of boats. We are oblig'd to go three miles for our wood and the only way we can get it is by water, besides pirogues will not do to carry troops down the river (which has been the case very often) to escort the provision ascending the Wabash for the difficulties before mentioned. I would beg the favor you would be pleased to send me on another for I can assure you that it is imposible for this garrison to do without one.

I inclose the distences of the Wabash. I have had it from people who have often been in that countrey; I have not confined my self to particular places mentioned in the map, but the object was as I presumed to know every obstructions as well as the distances and to which I have particularly attended.

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[1] Corporal Core and Sergeant Graff.

[2] See Harmar to Hamtramck, p. 219.

[3] See Harmar to Hamtramck, p. 221.

The boat which carry this letter is send by me to the Falls by the direction of His Excellency to procure some corn for the use of the village which is in a starving condition;[4] so much so, that yesterday a woman, a boy of 12 years of age, and a girl of six were so much distressed by hunger, went to gather Indian patatoes, poisoned them selfs and die in about five hours. I have seen them my self. I have directed Mr. Peters that if he found that the boat would have time to go to head quarters before the corn could be procured by the contractor to send it.

We are in a similar situation in our garrison as you have been at Fort Washington. All this is indeed a bad begining for the first contract under our new goverment.

I received an express from Governor St. Clair the 14th instant. He says that he was stoped 15 days by the ice in the Mississippy and did not arrive at Kaskaskias until the 5th instant.[5]

Yesterday Capt. Pier Gamelin went as a messenger from the governor to the Indians on the Wabash and to those of the

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[4] On January 23, 1790, from Fort Steuben at the Falls of the Ohio, Governor St. Clair wrote to Hamtramck, "It is with great pain that I have heard of the scarcity of corn which reigns in the settlement about the Post. I hope it has been exaggerated, but it is represented to me that, unless a supply of that article can be sent forward, the people must actually starve. Corn can be had here in quantity, but can the people pay for it? I entreat you to inquire into the matter, and if you find that they can not do without it, write to the contractor's agent here, to whom I write you orders to send forward such quantity as you may find to be absolutely necessary. They must pay for what they can of it; they must not be suffered to perish. And, though I have no direct authority from the government for this purpose, I must take it upon myself. . . ." Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 131-32.

[5] St. Clair left Fort Washington on January 5, so his passage down the Ohio and up the Mississippi to Kaskaskia took two months.

Miamie with propositions of peace.[6] What his success will be time can only determine, although I am most certain that

[6] St. Clair enclosed in his letter to Hamtramck of January 23, "a speech to the Indians of the Wabash and those of the Miami village," a message demanding assurances of peace and friendship from these tribes, which he asked Hamtramck to forward to them. This was St. Clair's move in following the President's instructions to determine the disposition of the Indians. (See above, p. 212n). The Governor suggested that the person carrying the message should probably be a Frenchman and the speech should be translated into French and be made perfectly clear to the Indians through interpreters. "It is much the wish of the general government that peace may be established with those people, and the trial to affect it must be made. Should it fail, there is no doubt but an attempt must be made to chastise them." Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 131.

Hamtramck wrote on February 24 to Winthrop Sargent, secretary of the Territory, who was then at Kaskaskia with Governor St. Clair, that he could not send the speech to the Indians when he received it, for all the Indians were then out hunting and it was necessary for the chiefs and warriors "to be present and deliberate on the propositions made to them." He therefore sent word to the villages that a messenger was coming with a speech from the Governor, and for them to gather in their town to receive him. Hamtramck expressed to Sargent his doubt that the Miami would be won over and added: "I think the best treaty would be a good flogging." Sargent Collection, Massachusetts Historical Society.

The Frenchman selected by Hamtramck to take the message was Pierre Gamelin, a member of a prominent Vincennes family. He went up the Wabash as far as the Vermilion River, where he received a friendly welcome, but no definite answer from the Indians there. He reported to Hamtramck that while there his life had been threatened by a personal enemy, one of the Vermilion Indians, and therefore he returned to Vincennes. Hamtramck then dispatched a second messenger, this time Antoine Gamelin, who went as far as the Miami town (site of Fort Wayne). He was well received by the tribes he visited—Wea, Shawnee, Potawatomi—along the way, but they were evasive in their answers to the message and referred him to the Miami for reply. The Miami were obviously under the influence of the English at Detroit and, on the whole, prospects of peace were not bright. It was Gamelin's report of his mission combined with continuing acts of hostility by the Indians on the Ohio and its tributaries, generally attributed to the Miami, that caused St. Clair to abandon hopes for peaceful negotiations with the Wabash and Miami Indians, and to return to Fort Washington from the Illinois country without stopping at Vincennes. Hamtramck to St. Clair, April 19, 1790, and St. Clair to the Secretary of War, May 1, 1790, in Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 135, 136; same to same, August 23, 1790, in *American State Papers. Indian Affairs,* I, 92-93; Antoine Gamelin's journal of his mission, in *ibid.,* I, 93-94. See also Hamtramck to Harmar, May 16, and Harmar to Hamtramck, July 15, below.

the Wabash Indians will have no objections to come in to pacific measures with the United States, but I have my doubts about the Miamie. They are too near the British influance and if I have not given you any newse from Detroit it is because these rascals have shut the communication betwixt Detroit and us for 15 months pass. However, I am in hopes that in a few days I will have it in my power to give you some information respecting that quarter.

Inclosed is the returns of the last inspection and also a return of articles very much wanted in the Q. M. Department.

As the weather for exercise is approaching I should be glad to have them to practise with ammunition. If you think proper to grant it, I shall want powdre and balls from head quarters.

As I have a private servent I would be very much oblige to you if you would send me on a suit of cloaths for him. I should not trouble you if goods were not dear in this place, for if I was to buy him cloaths it would cost me 40 or 50 Doll.

[Addressed:] Brigadier General Harmar Fort Washington

[Endorsed:] Major John F. Hamtramck from Fort Knox at Post Vincennes, March 17th 1790. Answered August 27th 1790

[P. S.] DEAR GENERAL Since I have closed my letter I have reflected that we are very often wanting tents to go with small command. I will be very much oblig'd to you if you would send me six. I am &c—the Boat is going off—

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

[Enclosure-D]

From Post Vincennes to the Mouth of the Wabash is called sixty leagues. From Post Vincennes to the Terre Haute 40 leagues without rapids and a good navigation. From Terre Haute to Vermillion River N. side twenty leagues, the navigation as before. From Vermillion to the Weeha twenty leagues, the navigation still better. From the Weeha to the River and town Teopicanoes north side six leagues, excellent. From the

Teopicanoes to La Vashe qui prise two leagues. Here is a flat rapid of about 10 acres, sometimes there is not more than one foot of water. From the La Vashe qui prise to Ile a l'aile (this is an island with a French name) 4 leagues. The channel is on the left going up and sometimes there is not above eight inches of water for fifteen acres in length. From Ile a la l'aile to Petit Rocher six leagues. Here is a strong rapid of eight acres but plenty of water, and directly above the rapid is a flat of 1/2 league and sometimes not six inches of water. From Petit Rocher to the mouth of Eel River north side 2 leagues, a good navigation. From the Eel River to the Great Rapid one league. This rapid is 15 acres in length and in some places there is not above 8 inches of water & above the rapid is a flat of 1/2 league with six inches water. From the Great Rapid to Calumet River south side 4 leagues. Here is a rapid of ten acres in length but good water. From Calumet River to an island is one league. The passage is on the left. Above this island is a flat for one acre with about six inches of water. From the island to Rapid St. Sire [?] is 3 leagues. This rapid is 1/2 league long but good water. From Rapid St. Sire [?] to River Massissinoue south side is 2 leagues. Here is a rapid of 12 acres long sometimes there is not more than one foot water. From Massissinoue to the Hospital 7 leagues. Those 7 leagues are in a very low country and very little water, and at the Hospital there is one league that is uncommonly low, so much so that perriogues are obliged to lighten to ascend it. This place is remarkable by a rock on the north side. From the Hospital to River Salamanie is 3 leagues. Here is an island, the passage is on the south side where there is a rapid of 3 acres, with good water. From Salamanie River to the bended maple one league. *There terminates the navigation.*

From the bended maple to Little River north side is four leagues. Here you take this Little River to go to the Miami and quit the Wabash on the south side. From the Little River to the portage of the Miami is twelve leagues. The portage is

3 1/2 leagues which carries you to the Miami village on the River St. Joseph. From the Miami village to the rapid of the Wolf is 51 leagues. Here sometimes you are obliged to unload, and the intermediate navigation is full of small rapids but with plenty of water. From the Wolf Rapid to La Roche de Bout is 3 leagues long but with good water. From La Roche de Bout to Lake Erie is six leagues. From the entrance of the lake to the mouth of Detroit River is twelve leagues. From the mouth of Detroit River to the fort is six leagues. Here is water enough for any thing.[7]

It must be observed that at high water such as is in the month of March, April and a few days in May there is water enough to go to the portage of the Miami at which place the water divides. Some of the waters discharge themselves into Lake Erie and others into the River Wabash.

(Signed) J. F. HAMTRAMCK
Major 1st U. S. Regt.

N. B. A number of rivers which are in the map on the north side is a mistake—viz.:

River Du chat is on the S. side
River d'Erablieres on the S. side
Petite River is on the north side
River a Calumet is on the south side
River Salamanie is on the south side
Ecor a Amelin is on the north side

[Endorsed:] Major Hamtramck's account of the navigation of the Wabash River, and the distances from its mouth to Detroit.

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[7] Lieut. Gov. Henry Hamilton followed this route in reverse in 1778 when he went from Detroit to Vincennes. It is interesting to check his description of it with Hamtramck's report. John D. Barnhart (ed.), *Henry Hamilton and George Rogers Clark in the American Revolution with the Unpublished Journal of Lieut. Gov. Henry Hamilton* (Crawfordsville, Ind., 1951).

Capt. James Bradford to Harmar, March 18, 1790

[ALS]

Post Vincennes 18th March '90

Sir, With pleasure I set down to acknowledge the receipt of your much esteemed favour of the 25th October last in the acknowledgement of which permit me to return you my best thanks for the attention you were pleased to pay to my last letters, respecting the embarrasments subsisting between Major Hamtramck and myself relative to my company, a circumstance that I am persuaded has been attended with consequences not disadvantageous to the parties, or the publick concern.

I am happy the pecan nuts arrived in safety and that they proved acceptable to Mrs. Harmar. Whenever opportunity will place me in a situation to forward more, I shall willingly embrace it.

By a letter I have received from Major Doughty at the Mouth of the Wabash he informs me that the cloathing for my company had all reached Pittsburgh, that necessary directions had been given Mr. Ernest to forward them for head quarters, and that he had ordered Captain Ferguson to forward them for me. Permit me to enforce the necessity there is for their arriving as speedily as possible. It is now upward of twelve months since I left Fort Harmar, and my men have not received any one particle of cloathing whatever but what was in my own power to supply them with. The major part of them have already received a first, second, and third shirt, and one pair shoes nearly each. These are begining to be exhausted, and another supply will be absolutely requisit, which to prevent their being obligated to pay the extravagant prices of this village, necessitates me to enforce how acceptable the arrival of their cloathing will be. When I last wrote Major Doughty, being then in daily expectation of my cloathing, I beg'd leave to submit to him the wish I had to make some little addition thereon (a gratification that I believe I obtained when at Fort Harmar under your immediate command), knowing that Major Hamtramck then would not suffer any innovations, without being sanctioned by yourself, as the absence of Major Doughty will not enable me to obtain his approbation. Permit me to suggest my wishes on the subject, and to receive your concurrence. To obviate any opinion in which you may think that this may originate as a whim of my own, it may be requisit to observe that it was sanctioned at Fort Harmar more for uniformity sake than any advantage that might acrue the soldiery.

It amounts simply to this, that I may substitute black binding for my men's hats, in preference to what the cloathing at present coming forward may be; it is presumeable that it is yellow—that I may place on each man's collar a small piece of blue cloth and buttons thus | o |, similar to the uniform worn by the officers, and in lieu of two roses on each hipp, I may substitute two buttons to prevent too great a simularity.

Tolerate me in advancing a circumstance that I am sensible will not escape your notice, but as I feel myself personally interested, and particularly attached to my old and favourit company, the most of whose times expire in February and March next, that I may willingly retain as many of them, as in my own opinion I may think calculated for service. I am much flattered by their repeated offers of reengaging with me, but am prevented, as I do not feel myself authorised to form any negotiations of this nature without your assent. This I flatter myself I shall readily receive by the first conveyance, as I am satisfy'd you will agree with me in opinion, that the publick and its service will be benefited by such a measure. An objection you may think will origin[ate] that as the publick has not as yet taken any steps towards a reestablishment, it may be improper. I hope this cause will cease to exist when I remark that the men may be reengaged, and if our country sh[all] not concieve it necessary to retain either its present officers or establishment, there can be no difficulty. For the enlistments may then be given up without an inconvenience to any one. I sincerely hope you will agree in sentiment with me, and that I shall receive the necessary information as early as may be consistent.

We are led to believe that Captain Smith comes forward with a complete company. There are some of his old company who have been reenlisted at this post. Should he not be in want of them, would you sanction a transfer of such as I may be enabled to obtain. I am deficient one serjeant and I think I may venture to pronounce one corporal, if we consider the present situation of the coar [*sic*], and four matrasses for the establishment, and there may be a reasonable objection to three or four of my present command, whose debilitated situation from different causes I presume renders them unfit for our present profession.

After presenting my best respects to Mrs. Harmar, believe me to be with every sentiment of esteem, your hum'le servant,

J. Bradford

Brigadier Gen'l Harmar

[Endorsed:] Captain James Bradford from Post Vincennes, March 18th 1790. Answered September 3rd, 1790.

Hamtramck to Harmar, April 20, 1790

[ALS]

Fort Knox at Post Vincennes
April the 20th 1790

Dear general, Capt. Beatty did not finish his settlement with the troops before the first instant and I have not been able to dispatch him before for the want of provision and which arrived only yesterday.

Since I had the honor of writing last I have had no newse worth communicating. The 19th of last month Lieut. Armstrong went to Kaskaskias. I am afeard some accidents has happened him for I have not yet heard of his arrival.

Inclosed is the proceedings of the genr. court martial, the inspection return of the different companies, the return of Q. M. & military stores, the medical return, the monthly return of the troops. Capt. Beatty has with him the muster rolls until April 10. Their is also inclosed a return of ammunition damaged since last inspection in a very severe storm on the night of the 15th.

Capt. McCurdey goes to head quarter in arrest, but as I could not give him the charges, I have told him that he would be furnished at head quarters with his crime.[1]

The public horses were so much worn out by hard service and old age that I have been obliged to direct Capt. Asheton to purchase me a pr. in Kentuck. I have since sold the old pr. for 40 dollars. The men who purchased them paid the contractor in corn and for which the contractors are to give cr[edit] to the United States. So that the new horses will not perhaps cost more than 20 doll., for I should suppose that 60 dollars would procure an excellent pr.

I have heard that Doughty was defeated on Cherokee River and himself killed.[2] I am also informed that the Indians are continuing their depredation on the Ohio. They have taken a number of boats near the Scioto. I believe that it must be the Indians from the Miamie. I think that all these affairs must put a stop to the pacific intention of the United

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[1] See above, Harmar to Hamtramck, p. 219.

[2] Major Doughty had been charged by the Secretary of War with a mission of peace to the Cherokee similar to the Gamelin mission to the Wabash tribes and the Miami. General Harmar had expressed misgivings about Doughty's expedition to Governor St. Clair and they were well founded. Doughty had not been killed but his party had met with disaster. He wrote to his friend Major Wyllys from New Madrid on March 25, "On the 22d instant, about two hundred and thirty miles up the Tennessee, I was attacked with great force by a party of Indians. Out of fifteen men, they killed six and wounded five more, so that I have only four left. We fought them four hours, and then escaped in this distressed situation. I found it impossible to ascend the Ohio, or, after I reached the Mississippi, to ascend it. My wounded men were in so distressed a situation as to require immediate assistance. The only resource left me was to come to this place, where I have met with every civility I could wish from Mons. Fouchet [Pedro Foucher], the commanding officer." Doughty asked Wyllys to send a good pilot and boat to take him and the remnants of his party to Kaskaskia. Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 134. A copy of Doughty's report to the Secretary of War, written from Kaskaskia, dated April 7, 1790, is in the Harmar Papers.

States towards those vilains. The messenger who went with the governor speach to the Miamie informs me of his reception in the different villages on the Wabash which he says are tolerable that none of the Indians would give him any diffinitive answer but are waiting to know the answer of the Miamie which is to govern them.

In my opinion the affair stands that if at the time the messenger arrives at the Miamie their should be any British traders of influance with them from Detroit that the Indians will refuse to come to terms with the United States. It is the traders who are every day inducing the Indians to go to war. They return to their village with plunder and horses which the traders get of them for rum or little or nothing, and so it must be until we get Detroit.

As there is a carriage very much wanted for the howitz, I should be glad to know if I may go to the expence of having one made.

The articles of war says that an officer who is put in arrest is to be deprived of his soord by his commanding officer. I should be very much oblige to you to inform me how you understand it, for I was at lost when I arrested McCurdey.

Capt. Beatty will give you 19 doll. and some $\frac{90}{00}$. which was taken from Withzel.[3]

Mr. Prior has made an acct. against the United States for his services as adj't and Q. M. to the garrison at Fort Knox. I have signed it on the condition that it shall meet with your approbation.

I am, dear sir, with every sentiments of respect your most obedient and very humble servent

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

Will you be so good as to present my best respects to Mrs. Harmar. Little Charles must be a fine boy by this time.

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[3] Probably the money that McCurdy had taken from Lewis Wetzel when the latter was taken by McCurdy's men at Limestone. See above, p. 209n, and below, p. 250.

P. S. I take the liberty to offer an opinion which is that if you shou'd continue a garrison next summer at this post the old troops are the best carculated, for they are in some measure use to the climate: as a proof of it, is that last summer Capt. Smith company had but one man in the hospital and did the greatest part of all the duties, fatigues of the garrison. I hope that your goodnes will pardon me for going too far in to things which perhaps dos not consern me.

J. F. H.

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brigadier General Harmar Fort Washington on the Ohio

[Endorsed:] Major John F. Hamtramck from Fort Knox at Post Vincennes. April 20th 1790. Answered August 27th, 1790.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, May 16, 1790

[LS]

FORT KNOX May 16th 1790

DEAR GENERAL The last time I had the honor to address you was by Capt. Beatty. I now profit of the opportunity of Capt. Armstrong who is on his way to Head Quarters, with Major Doughty's dispatches. The messenger that had gone to the Wabash and Miami Indians is returned. The Indians of the Wabash would not come into any measures without first knowing what the Miami would do and the Miami would not give any answer untill they had consulted the British at Detroit, *so the matter stands.*[1] Those excuses are unfavorable omens, for they certainly are acquainted with each others sentiments and I think that a war seems inevitable. Three days after the messenger had left the Miami, an American was burnt there, and some merchants who are lately arrived from above informs me, that as soon as the Governor's messenger had repassed, they all went to Kentucky. There is also a party of Ottawas from Michlimackinack in Kentucky and many Potawatamies. Capt. Bradford is down the Wabash with forty men, escorting a band which is coming up, and as soon as he arrives I am to send forty men to the Illinois to escort His Excellency to the Post. A merchant from Detroit tells me that Lord Dorchester[2] and Judge Smith[3] are called home, and that one General Clark[4] is to command in Canada. I inclose a number of letters that I have had on hand a long time, also the monthly return for May. As Mr. Jackson who lately came from New York to speculate on the soldiers, may return through Head Quarters it is necessary you should be informed, that altho' he has been an officer last war, he is by no means intitled to your attention, as he has taken the liberty to speak disrespectfully of you and which I have informed him I would let you know off.[5]

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[1] See above, pp. 224n, 232.

*I am with very great respect and esteem your most obedient and very humble servent

J. F. Hamtramck

B. G. Harmar

Will you be so good as to present my respects to Mrs. Harmar.

Inclosed is a return of the damaged ammunition on the night of the 12 of May. Lt. Armstrong will inform you how it happened.

J. F. H.

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brigadier General Harmar Fort Washington

[Endorsed:] Major John F. Hamtramck from Fort Knox May 16th 1790 Answered August 28th 1790

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[2] Governor of Canada. Since he did not leave Quebec until 1796, Hamtramck's information was incorrect.

[3] Not identified.

[4] Perhaps Maj-Gen. Sir Alured Clarke who served on the staff at Quebec from 1791 to 1793.

[5] For Harmar's comment on Major Jackson, see his letter to Hamtramck, August 27, below.

* From this point on the letter is in Hamtramck's hand.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, June 24, 1790

[ALS]

FORT KNOX June the 24th 1790

DEAR GENERAL The judges arrived at this place the 19th inst. Major Wyllys who is the bearer of this letter is this day going to the falls and says that he expect to pay you a visit. I have had some conversation about a number of interesting affair to the regiment which he will lay before you, but they are given in a private manner.[1]

I have no neuse to inform you with. I shall then conclude with assuring that it is with every sentiment of respect and esteem that I subscribe myself your most obedient and very humble servant

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

BRIG'R GEN'L HARMAR

Will you be pleased to present my best respects to Mrs. Harmar

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brigadier General Harmar Fort Washington

[Endorsed:] Major John F. Hamtramck from Fort Knox June 24th 1790

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[1] See below, Hamtramck to Harmar, January 25, 1791, for the subject of this "private matter."

HARMAR TO HAMTRAMCK, July 5, 1790

[Letterbook Copy]

HEAD QUARTERS, FORT WASHINGTON
July 5th 1790

DEAR MAJOR, Ensign Melcher,[1] who will deliver you this letter after accomplishing his business at the Tenesee,[2] is ordered by me to go to Post Vincennes, & there to be arranged to Captain McCurdy's company. You will therefore direct

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[1] Ens. Jacob Melcher, of Pennsylvania.

[2] Melcher was ordered to the mouth of the Tennessee River to deliver powder, lead, and blankets to the Chickasaw and Choctaw. Harmar to Melcher, July 5, 1790. Harmar Papers.

Lieut. Spear to repair to head quarters, & join Captain Ferguson's company of artillery. A new military establishment has taken place;[3] Melcher will deliver you the act of Congress. I shall write you fully by Serjeant Lawler, & by that opportunity shall send a complete suit of clothing for Bradford's and McCurdy's companies.

I am, D'r Sir, your h'ble serv't,

JOS. HARMAR
Lt. Col. Com. 1st U. S. Reg't.

MAJOR HAMTRAMCK Com. Officer Fort Knox Post Vincennes

[Marginal note:] Pr Ensign Melcher

HARMAR TO HAMTRAMCK, July 15, 1790

[Letterbook Copy]

HEAD QUARTERS, FORT WASHINGTON
July 15th 1790

DEAR SIR, By the return of Governor St. Clair,[1] I find all

[3] A summary of the new establishment under the law of April 30, 1790, is given in Jacobs, *The Beginning of the U. S. Army*, pp. 50-51: "By its terms the 700 existing troops were increased to 1,216. They were to be organized into a regiment of infantry and a battalion of artillery with the customary quota of officers. Men were enlisted and officers commissioned for only three years. Privates' pay amounted to $2 monthly after deductions had been made for clothing and hospital stores; sergeants had theirs established at $3.50 after a deduction of $1.50 for the same purposes. . . . In the new organization, the lieutenant colonel commandant had the highest rank and was paid $60 monthly; an ensign had the lowest and drew only $18. Some officers might earn $10 more a month if they were selected to perform the duties of adjutant, paymaster, or quartermaster. Both enlisted and commissioned personnel were entitled to the customary ration consisting of bread, meat, and whisky, plus a small amount of vinegar, soap, and candles. No clothing or equipment was to be furnished officers. Every enlisted man was to have a yearly issue of a hat, coat, vest, blanket, one pair of buckles, a stock and clasp, four shirts, two pairs of overalls and socks, and four of shoes. Neither overcoats nor underwear were to be supplied."

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[1] St. Clair left Kaskaskia on June 11, and arrived at Fort Washington on July 13. He returned by water and did not go to Vincennes.

prospects of peace with the Indians are at an end; we are therefore planning an expedition against them, to go forward from hence about the 1st October—300 Kentucky militia will be ordered to join you at the post, which with your regular force, and the French militia, will make in the whole I suppose nearly 500 men.

The contractor assures me he will make the necessary arrangements respecting provisions, and packhorses. With this force you are to strike either at Vermillion, L'Anguille, or if you should judge it any way practicable, the Weea Towns. At any rate I expect you will manouvre in such a manner as to divert the attention of the Miamis to that quarter, whilst I shall use all possible means to destroy their village, as I hope to be furnished with the means to carry on a serious expedition against them.[2] You will make every preparation to start before me; for this purpose it will be necessary that you move on the 25th September. If I should prove successful at the Miami Village, & you at the Weeas, Vermillion, or L'Anguille, I would wish you to endeavor to communicate with me, not in writing, but by means of some trusty Frenchman or other, so that we may concert further operations.

[2] St. Clair described the plans for the expedition to the Secretary of War in more detail on August 23: "The number of militia I was empowered to call for was one thousand from Virginia, and five hundred from Pennsylvania, to act in conjunction with the continental troops; these the General estimated at four hundred effective. The manner of employing this force, which was concluded upon, is this: three hundred of the militia of Virginia [Kentucky] are to rendezvous at fort Steuben, and with the garrison of that fort, to march to Post Vincennes and join Major Hamtramck; the remaining twelve hundred of the militia to assemble at fort Washington, under the orders of General Harmar, which, with the troops to be collected there, will form a body of fifteen hundred: these are intended to march directly across the country to the Miami village, while Major Hamtramck moves up the Wabash to attack any of the villages on that river to which his force may be equal; but, as it is not so respectable as I could wish, I took it upon myself to give him authority to call for aid from the militia of Post Vincennes." St. Clair also reported that the contractor would not be able to supply flour for the expedition, but that corn was available in Kentucky. *American State Papers. Indian Affairs,* I, 92.

I am, Dear Sir, with great esteem your h'ble serv't,

Jos. Harmar
Lt. Col. Com. 1st U. S. R.

Major J. Hamtramck, Commanding Officer at Fort Knox Post Vincennes

P. S. Enclosed is the new act of Congress with my orders respecting it. J. H.

[Marginal note:] Forwarded pr Major Wyllys

Ensign Jacob Melcher to Hamtramck, July 28, 1790[1]

[ALS]

Lance a la Grace July 28th 1790
or
New Madrid

My dear Major, I am sorry to inform you that I was attacked on the morning of the 23d instant in company with Mr. Vigo's boat and defeated with the loss of one man killed and two wounded.[2] The situation I was in was very dangerous, nor had I an idea that I should have been able to extracate myself from it. But through the badness of their shooting and the heavy fire which I keep up on them was the only thing that saved my boat. It was allmost impossible to escape. My boat struck the ground twice but fortunately got her off. The passage was very narrow. However, I had the good luck to come off and retreated as far as the mouth of the River Wabash where I buried Sisson of Captain Ziegler's company, and remain'd there one day, having no provision (mine being out on the 24th inst) and my wounded complaining, I was under the disagreeable necessity to go to this place for provision and shall to day leave this for Kaskaskias where I shall remain until I hear from you.

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[1] This was enclosed in Hamtramck to Harmar, August 20, 1790, below.

[2] Melcher, after delivering his cargo to the Choctaw and Chickasaw at the Tennessee River, was returning up the Ohio, bound for Vincennes. Near the mouth of the Wabash he met a boat belonging to Vigo and the two crafts started up the Wabash together. Vigo's boat had been bound for the East, but had been attacked on the Ohio near Blue River. Three of his men were killed, and the boat was returning to Vincennes. Melcher, in the encounter on the Wabash, as he reports to Hamtramck, lost one man killed and had two wounded. He retreated down river to New Madrid. The savages took possession of Vigo's boat, plundered the personal baggage and arms, but since the crew were Frenchmen, they were permitted to keep their cargo of peltry and return to Vincennes. St. Clair to the Secretary of War, September 19, 1790, in *Amercian State Papers. Indian Affairs,* I, 95-96.

I know [not] what I am to do with the boat. My party is small and it would only be sacrificing a handful of brave men to take them up the river. The waters are fairly alive with savages. The boat is old and fairly worn out. There is no loading on board. I have wrote to Mr. Edgar to send an express off immediately with this and I will be happy if you will let me hear from you as soon as possible.

My men are very much fatigued. My serg't (Shay) of Capt. Mercer's[3] company is sick. I must leave him here. The treatment of the comm'dt[4] here I cannot at present paint to you. His goodness exceeds every thing. He supplies me with every thing. There are many deserters here. Two of Captain McCurdy's arrived here a few days ago. I shall wait with impatience to hear from you to know what assistance I can have. I finish'd my business with the Chicasaw. Had like to have got paid at the Tenissee. A large party of Cherokies & Creeks were waiting for me a long time but finding that I did not come at the time appointed they returned and told them that there was no body there and that the boat was defeated. The Indians they sent up with me left at the Tenissee to return to their nation. They do not like the spot well enough to try it again.

I must conclude and am with sentiments of the highest esteem your most ob't s't

JACOB MELCHER
1st U. S. Reg't.

MAJOR HAMTRAMCK Com'g Post Vincennes

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[3] Capt. John Mercer.

[4] Probably Pedro Foucher, a young French officer who had been appointed commandant at New Madrid by the Spanish Governor Miró.

N. B. The people in Mr. Vigo's boat fired but a few shot. I believe not more than four or five, nor shew'd themselves, but hid I believe in the bottom of the boat.

BARTHÉLEMI TARDIVEAU TO HAMTRAMCK, August 1, 1790[1]
[ALS]

KASKASKIA August 1st 1790

DEAR SIR I take the liberty to beg of you to forward the inclosed by the earliest opportunity.

I hope Major Wyllys has given you such a specimen of our Illinois country, in regard to the difficulty of establishing a regular government & organizing the militia without the assistance of a military force, as will induce you to send us a detachment from Poste Vincennes as soon as you can spare it. Such a succour is also much wanted to enable us to repel the daily invasions made by the Indians upon our property: not that I expect you may at present send a sufficient body of men to protect alone our country; or that I would wish to throw altogether upon the troops the burden of an Indian war for our sake. I wish only that we had here ever so small a number of Regulars under the command of a captain, if possible; the presence of whom would be sufficient to keep the inhabitants in awe, & make them respect & obey the orders I would give them for their own safety & preservation. The Indians have daily stolen horses from the different settlements in this county: I have as often endeavoured to raise a sufficient force, not only to go after the robbers, but to attack their camp, which is only two days' march from here; but all my exertions have proven fruitless, by the ungovernable obstinacy of a few ringleaders, who pride in resisting every kind of authority &

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[1] This was enclosed in Hamtramck to Harmar, August 20, 1790, below. Tardiveau who had been in the East returned to Kaskaskia while St. Clair was there. He had been in New York pleading the cause of the French inhabitants before Congress and in Danville, Kentucky, where he engaged in various enterprises with his brother Pierre. Rice, *Barthélemi Tardiveau,* pp. 40-41.

opposing every measure calculated for the public good. Ten soldiers would do more in subduing them & bringing them to obedience than the militia law, or all the civil pow'r can. Provisions are in great plenty now, as we have had a very good crop.

Please present my respects to Major Sarjent[2] and Judge Symmes. I have not the honour to write to Major Sarjent, having wrote rather too long a letter to the Governor, which I suppose will be open'd by him.

I have the honor to be with the most sincere esteem, dear sir, your most obedient & humble serv't,

B. TARDIVEAU

[Addressed:] MAJOR HAMTRAMCK, commandant, Poste Vincennes

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[2] Winthrop Sargent, territorial secretary. When St. Clair left Kaskaskia he gave Sargent a letter which said "that as soon as I had embarked, he [Sargent] was to consider me as absent, and, in consequence, the government devolved upon himself, and desired him to proceed to the Post [Vincennes], lay out a county there, establish the militia, and appoint the civil and military officers." St. Clair to Secretary of War Knox, August 23, 1790, in Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* 160; see also St. Clair to Hamtramck in Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers,* III, 312-13. Sargent arrived in Vincennes in mid-June. *Ibid.,* III, 313. John Cleves Symmes and George Turner, territorial judges, arrived in Vincennes June 19. See above, Hamtramck to Harmar, June 24. Sargent left Vincennes early in August. For Sargent's actions as acting governor while at Vincennes, in establishing Knox County, making civil appointments, and organizing the militia, see "Journal of Executive Proceedings of the Territory Northwest of the River Ohio," in Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers,* III, 313-29. While Sargent was at Vincennes he received from the citizens an expression of the "gratitude and esteem which every citizen of Vincennes conceives he owes to an officer who has long commanded at this post . . . the just and humane attention paid by Major Hamtramck during his whole command, to the rights and feelings of every individual craving his interposition demand and will receive our warmest acknowledgments." Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers,* II, 291-92. Apparently Sargent, in turn, commended Hamtramck, for the latter wrote to the Acting Governor on July 21, 1790, thanking him "for the very polite manner in which you have been pleased to communicate your approbation of my conduct. . . ." Sargent Collection, Massachusetts Historical Society.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, August 2, 1790
[ALS]

FORT KNOX August the 2d 1790

DEAR GENERAL, Mr. Prior is with 19 men to escort the secretary up the river and if they should go as far as Fort Washington I beg you will send them back immediatly. McCurdey men that he took with him are also very much wanted for we will have many sick in a few days.

Mr. Melker was fired on the 23 of last month in the Wabash in company with Mr. Vigo boat. I believe he is gone to New Orleans, or L'Ance a la Graise. Mr. Vigo men give Mr. Melker a very bad reputation. I hope Mr. Melker will justify his conduct.[1]

Major Sargent and myself have been informed that measures had been taken at the Miamie village to assemble a number of nations (as soon as the corn will be ripe) to pay you a visit. *This plan is certainly on foot.* How far they will succeed time will determine. The Sacs, the Renards, and the Potawatomies have had an invitation.[2]

The situation of this garrison is truly alarming for the want of provision. The cattle were to be here the 15 of June and their is no sign of them. The flour we have will last but few days and none can be procured in the village.

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[1] See Melcher to Hamtramck, July 28, above.

[2] Secretary Sargent wrote to Hamtramck from Vincennes on July 16, 1790, relative to this: "By Intelligence from the Indian Country I understand that the Miamis are & have been for some time past using every Effort to effect a general Meeting of the Warriors in the next month— They have not only sent their Belts of Invitation to the Wabash Tribes, but extended them to the Saukies & Reynards upon the Mississippi as well as the Putawatimes & Ottawas of Lake Michigan, & will most probably have the Address to be in considerable Force at the Miamis Towns by that Period." Sargent thought their object was defense rather than offense. "Some of their old Men have been long preaching to them of the Vengeance that would eventually overtake them for their Depredations upon the United States— The British are cautioning them to watch well the Road to their Towns, & the Governour's ascending the River has also tended to alarm them—" Sargent also says that there was a trader among the Indians who would obtain and pass on to Hamtramck information on the Indians' strength and intentions. Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers,* III, 320-21.

The two accidents that have happened to the magazine has reduced greatly the quantity of our ammunition and if you though[t] propre to send some, Ensign Prior would be a very good opportunity.

The murderer and the corporal (the deserter)[3] have made their escape from the guard house on the night of the 20th of July.

I have the honour to inclose the monthly return, the inspection returns and muster rolls. The return of ordinance I have not yet received from Bradford, but will send it as soon as possible. Also is inclosed the return of the contractor.

I find that non of the companies have bruches and prikers. It is a very necessary thing. If you have any on hand at head quarters I will be very much obliged to you to send me some.

How is it with the men whos time will expire in a few days? Can I reenliste them?

I am, dear general, with very great respect your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

TO BRIGD. GEN. HARMAR

P. S. I will be very much oblige to you to present my respects to Mrs. Harmar and my compliments to Wyllys.

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brigadier General Harmar Fort Washington

[Endorsed:] Major John F. Hamtramck Post Vincennes August 2nd 1790. Answered September 3rd 1790.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, August 3, 1790

[ALS]

FORT KNOX August the 3d 1790

DEAR GENERAL, This letter is by an expres from the commissary to the Falls of the Ohio for provision. We are in a miserable situation. The cattle who were to be here the 15 of last June are not yet arrived. Major Sargent will go in two or there days up the river. I will be obliged to give him an escort to go with him as far as the Rappids of the Ohio.

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[3] Michael Graff and Cpl. David Core.

Mr. Vigo boat was fired on at Bleu River on the Ohio. They lost 3 men killed, wich obliged them to return to the village. Mr. Melker and Mr. Vigo boat ascended the Wabash together and about the Grande Chaine they were fired on and Melker went down the river I suppose to L'Ance a la Graise or New Orleans.

Major Sargent and my self have been informed that measures had been taken at the Miamie village to assemble a number of nations as soon as the corn is ripe (which will be in this month) to pay you a visit. *This plan is certainly on foot.* The Renards, the Sacks, and Petowatomies have had an invitation. By Major Sargent I shall send the muster and the returns of last inspection.

I have the honor to be, sir, with every sentiments of respect and esteem your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. Hamtramck

I have not heard from the Falls this two months. Neither have I heard of a boat with provision which was to be at the Mouth of the Ohio [Wabash?] the 23d of last month. I will be very much obliged to you to present my respects to Mrs. Harmar and my compliments to Wyllys.

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brigadier Genr. Harmar Fort Washington

[Endorsed:] Major John F. Hamtramck from Fort Knox, August 3rd 1790. Answered September 3rd 1790.

Hamtramck to Harmar, August 4, 1790

[ALS]

Fort Knox August 4th 1790

Dear Sir The within has taken place by my ordres with a supposition that their might be a probability of Mr. Schuyler recovering the cloaths which he has lost by those deserters from the wages remaining in the Capt. hands, or from what may be due them until they deserted which is left to your deliberation.[1]

I am, sir, with very great respect and esteem your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. Hamtramck

[Enclosure—DS]

Fort Knox 4th August 1790

Proceedings of a Board of Officers composed of Capt. Mercer, En'n. Spear & En'n. Prior, ordered by John F. Hamtramck Esqr. Major Commandant, to examin into a robbery committed by some deserters, and to inquire if Capt. Bradford had any of their money in his posession.

Serjt. Smith being sworn sayth that on the 19th May last he received from Lieut. Schuyler four shirts, three vests, one pair breeches, three pair stockings, one sheet, one table cloath, & two handkerchiefs, to be washed. That on the same night, Benejah Cleveland, James Byles, James Smyth, & Thomas Sneed, of Capt. Bradford's company deserted, that the next morning the cloathes were missing, and it is his opinion they were taken off by the above mentioned deserters.

The Board are of opinion the cloathes were taken by the deserters, and that the value of them at this place is eighty eight dollars and half.

Captain Bradford being sworn sayth that he has in his possession the property of James Smith, only, thirteen dollars & $\frac{40}{90}$ and Byles twelve dollars & $\frac{55}{90}$ amounting to twenty six dollars & $\frac{5}{90}$ and that he has no money in his posession belonging to Cleveland or Sneed.

John Mercer Capt.
Edward Spear *Lieut.*
A. Prior *En'gn*

John F. Hamtramck Esq'r
Major Commandant

[1] For Harmar's reply, see below, p. 255.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, August 7, 1790
[ALS]

FORT KNOX August the 7th, 1790

DEAR GENERAL I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th of July 1790 in which you informed me of the expedition against the Indians. It certainly was high time that such thing took place.

The number of men your are pleased to order me I believe will do very well, if I am to return immediatly after striking, but if I should be obliged to keep in that part of the country until I have heard from you, I am apprehensive that I should not come off so safe, for the Indians of the Vermillion who are 200 warriors, the Ouia 330, the Keecapoes (opposite the Ouia) 100 and those of Ell River 150, all whom are close to each other can assemble them selfs in to one body, amounting to 750 men, which force would then be more than mine and perhaps make a too powerfull obstruction to my return.

However be persuaded, sir, that I shall take every possible measures to comply with your direction and that if it is practicable I will send you a French man or some other man from that country.

You will see, sir, by the last return of ordinance now forwarded that there is no more than 195 doz of catriges on hand that we want near 40,000 for I should suppose that 75 pr man would not be too much. I have therefore dispatched Ensign Prior to Major Wyllys or to head quarters for some more. The men that Capt. McCurdey took up the river with him will be very much wanted, for I expect that the garrison will be very sickly at that time. Shoes will also be very necessary for the troops.

I am, dear general, with very great respect and esteem your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

HONORABLE GEN. HARMAR

We shall also want flints as I have no tent I will be oblig'd to you to send me one.

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brigadier General Harmar Fort Washington

[Endorsed:] Major John F. Hamtramck from Fort Knox, August 7th 1790. Answered September 3rd 1790.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, August 20, 1790

[ALS]

FORT KNOX August the 20th 1790

DEAR GENERAL Since I had the honor to write you which was by Major Sargent and Ensign Prior two Potawatomies and some Weeya Indians have come to the garrison to make peace. Those Potawatomies are of a band who lives near the Weeya (they are about 100 warriors) They made many protestations of friendship in their usual way. I told them that the Governor had sent his speach to all the nations on the Wabash last Spring, that they had thought propre to pay no attention to it and that in consequence of their not being disposed to make peace with him he had return to his country, he having no other business in this. That I have not authorized to make any treaty with them: but that if they were so well disposed as they pretended to be, they should bring all our prisoners they had in their villages. They went a way much disatisfyd. I would have deceived them by making peace with them but it could not be done without giving them goods. That I did not have.

Here is inclosed Ensign Melcher letter to me.[1] I have ordered him to be on an iland at the Mouth of the Wabash the 5th of September where he will see Prior and they will come up together.

The village is very sickly as well as the garrison. I have had a remitting fever on me for 10 days but I am geting better. I enclose Mr. Tardiveau's letter to me.[2] In my answer I have refered him to you. Also is inclosed the state of the garrison of this day; they are chiefly of McCurdey's company who are sick.[3]

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[1] See above, July 28.

[2] See above, August 1, and Harmar's reply in his letter of September 3, p. 256.

As I suppose Major Sargent to be with you I will be very much obliged to you if you will be pleased to assure him of my best respects. I had calculated to write to him but I find in writing this my eyes fails me.

You need not be uneasy at my being sick the 25 of next month. I am sure I shall do very well at that time for I mean to be very careful of myself and take plenty of bark. I belief Il take some artillery with me—the country is fine for a canon—unless you shoul object to it.

I am dear general with every sentiments of respects and esteem your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. Hamtramck

Brig. Gen. Harmar

[P. S.] We have no flower on hand and none to be had in the village.

J. F. H.

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brigadier General Harmar Fort Washington

[Endorsed:] Major F. Hamtramck from Fort Knox Post Vincennes August 20, 1790. Answered September 3rd, 1790.

[Enclosure—DS]

Return of the troops in the garrison of Fort Knox August 20th 1790

	Major	Capts.	Lieuts.	Ensigns	S. Mate	Serg'ts	Corp'ls	Music's	Privates
Pres. F. Duty	1	1	1	—	1	3	5	1	45
Sick Present	—	—	—	1	—	3	—	2	29
on Commd't	—	1	1	1	—	3	3	—	40

J. F. Hamtramck
Major Comd't

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[3] See the enclosure on this page.

THE SECRETARY OF WAR TO HARMAR, August 25, 1790

[LS]

WAR DEPARTMENT

NEW YORK 25th Aug't 1790

SIR

The proceedings of the general court martial of which Major John F. Hamtramck was President, held at Fort Knox, Post Vincennes, on the 19th day of March 1790, by your order, for the trial of David Core[1] of the Artillery and Michael Graff[2] of the Infantry, has been submitted to the President of the United States, who approves of the sentence of death passed upon David Core, and orders it to be executed at such time and place as you shall direct.

But as it does not appear from the evidence produced on the trial of Michael Graff accused of killing Serjeant Albion Guest, that there were any previous circumstances of facts of such a nature as to constitute the action malicious and wilful murder: the President of the United States is constrained to disaprove of the sentence passed against the said Michael Graff and to order him to be released from his confinement.

I am sir your most obedient servant

H. KNOX
Secretary of War

BRIGADIER GENERAL HARMAR

[Endorsed:] The Honorable Major General Knox War Office August 25th 1790 Answered December 4th 1790

HARMAR TO HAMTRAMCK, August 27, 1790

[LS]

HEAD QUARTERS, FORT WASHINGTON
August 27th 1790

DEAR MAJOR, I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your several letters of the 17th March, the 20th April, the 16th May, and the 24th June, and shall now reply to them.

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[1] The deserter. See above, pp. 182-83, 184, 215, 243.

[2] See above, pp. 207, 220.

I observe that you desire six tents to be forwarded to you for your small command; it is out of my power to furnish them. By ordering all the tents which were taken on to Fort Knox with the different companies to be returned into your quarter master's store, and none to be delivered from thence, but by your written order, I should suppose such a proceeding would always put it in your power to have a sufficiency for that purpose.

The bearer, Captain McCurdy, is acquitted by the Court Martial. The 19 dollars and some—$\frac{90}{100}$—taken from Whitzell were received, & delivered to the Court.[1] He takes on with him a complete suit of clothing both for Bradford's and his own company; also a complete suit for your private servant, in the boat called the *Governor's barge,* which is to remain at Fort Knox for public service. Would it not be possible for you to have 3 or 4 perrogues built at the post, instead of running the public to the enormous expence of hiring them at 10 livres pr day? It requires no great ingenuity to make them—I wish you to particularly attend to this matter.

The distances up the Wabash to Detroit which you enclosed me (with the obstructions in it) were very satisfactory.[2]

Endeavor all in your power to find out what the British are doing at the different posts of Detroit, Michillimackanac, & Niagara, and transmit me an account of their manouvres by the earliest opportunity.

The proceedings of the General Court Martial relative to Corporal Core & Graff have been transmitted to the War Office, but no decision thereon has as yet taken place.[3]

I shall expect Major Doughty here shortly; when I shall take his opinion about a carriage for the howitz; perhaps it will be most adviseable to send it to head quarters to be

[1] See above, pp. 208-9n, 215, 232, 250.

[2] See above, pp. 225-27.

[3] See above, August 25, 1790.

mounted, as you have a sufficiency of artillery without it, at Post Vincennes.

When an officer is ordered in arrest, he is certainly to be deprived of his sword by his commanding officer, agreeably to article 14th of the appendix to the Articles of War; a copy of which I now forward to you, also a copy of my orders of the 2d instant, respecting the effects of deceased soldiers &c to which particular attention must be paid.

I very much question whether Ensign Prior's account, as adjutant & quarter master, will be allowed; as in the former establishment only adjutant & quarter master were arranged to the regiment, and *their* duty is to be always present at head quarters. Beatty has taken on the account, without my signature.[4]

I agree with you in opinion that the old troops would be the most proper to remain stationed at Fort Knox, but this must altogether depend upon and be governed by future circumstances.

By some neglect or other your last monthly return was enclosed to the adjutant instead of myself. In future you will return the men of Smith's company as part of Captain Beatty's. Smith has gone to the southward long since, with a full company & of course has nothing to do with his old men, except transferring his accounts to Beatty.

There is now a vacancy for Mr. Britt, occasioned by the resignation of Ensign McDowell. He is desirous of being pay-master to the regiment. In my opinion he is the most suitable officer for the office that we can elect, and he shall have my interest for it. You will please to transmit me the votes of the officers of infantry at Post Vincennes, by the first opportunity upon this subject.[5] The artillery are to have a pay-master of their own.

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[4] See Hamtramck to Harmar, April 20, above.

[5] Daniel Britt. See his nomination for paymaster by the officers of Fort Knox, p. 265, below. He was commissioned November 5, 1790. Heitman (comp.), *Historical Register of the United States Army*, p. 146.

I now enclose to you some of the latest news-papers, by which you will observe that a rupture between Great Britain & Spain is very likely to ensue—in consequence of the latter having captured some British vessells in Nootka Sound.[6] You will likewise learn by them that the Great McGillivray, the chief of the Creeks,[7] was expected daily to arrive at New York, on a visit to the President of the United States, which it is supposed will be attended with salutary effects to the Union.

You inform me that a Major Jackson has spoken disrespectfully of me. This is the person that came on for the avowed design of speculating upon the soldiers installments, but was prevented by my written orders. What such contemptible fellows say of me is beneath my notice.

I am very sorry to inform you that insinuations have been thrown out here, not only by Captain McCurdy (but Major Wyllys & Captain Beatty also are in the sentiment) that this dishonorable traffic is going on at Post Vincennes, altho it cannot be perfectly traced. Bradford is by all accounts deep in the business,[8] and that Mr. Vanderburgh[9] is the grand operator.

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[6] For the Nootka Sound crisis see Chapter X in Whitaker, *The Spanish-American Frontier: 1783-1795.*

[7] Alexander McGillivray. The aim of the United States was to detach this powerful chief from the great Georgia land companies—the Tennessee Company, the Virginia Company, and the South Carolina Yazoo Company. These companies were organized under the authority of the State of Georgia, but she did not exercise control over them and the authority of the Federal government over them was not clear. The Yazoo Company was the most powerful. Its interests included slave trade and trade with the Indians, as well as land speculation. Overtures were made to Spain for support and cooperation in its enterprise. The problem of the young Federal government was to check the company's projects and Spanish intrigue and prevent its gaining the support of the powerful Creek Indians led by McGillivray. In August, 1790, a treaty was concluded between this chief and his headmen and the United States and the chief signed an oath of allegiance to the United States. See *ibid.,* Chapter IX.

[8] For Hamtramck's observations on Bradford see his letter of January 25, 1791, below.

[9] Henry Vanderburgh. See above, pp. 217-18, and note.

I sincerely hope that matters have been exaggerated in their representations, and call upon you, as commanding officer, to put an immediate stop to these abuses. The enclosed paper, which Captain McCurdy handed me, will shew you what one Charles Forgett relates, respecting the monopoly of Mr. Vanderburgh.[10] It is my duty to inform you of these insinuations, and at the same time to assure the officers that have been, or still are concerned in this dishonorable speculation, that they shall be called to a strict account for their conduct.[11]

I expect you have received my letters of the 5th & 15th ult. ere this can reach you. By the latest accounts from Kentucky, the militia are in very high spirits for the intended expedition. I beg you to particularly attend to the contents of my letter of the 15th July, a copy I would now send you but take it for granted, as Lieutenant Peters was to be the bearer of it, that it has arrived safe.

I am, Dear Sir, with great esteem your h'ble serv't,

Jos. HARMAR
Lt. Col. Com, 1st U. S. R.

MAJOR JOHN F. HAMTRAMCK
Comm'g Officer at Fort Knox at Post Vincennes
[Marginal note:] Favored pr Ensign Pryor

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[10] See below, p. 265.

[11] Harmar also wrote to Knox about this nefarious practice reputedly going on at the various posts. Knox replied: "I entirely approve of your not suffering the soldiers to receive large sums of money at once, and that it shall be given to them in such sums as best to promote their comfort. The captains are their most natural guardians and will prevent impositions. But the storekeepers ought to be well attended to, or their avarice will injure the confidence which the soldiers ought to have in the purity of the conduct of their officers. Nothing could be more pernicious, than an idea being entertained by the soldiers of their officers participating in the profits—or enjoying any advantage directly or indirectly from dealing with a particular store. . . ." Letter of September 14, 1790. Harmar Papers.

HARMAR TO HAMTRAMCK, September 3, 1790

[Letterbook Copy]

HEAD QUARTERS, FORT WASHINGTON
September 3d, 1790

DEAR SIR, The enclosed letter of mine dated the 27th ulto. was designed to have been sent by Captain McCurdy, but he has not yet returned to head quarters, altho' he might have been here a week ago; in the meantime, Ensign Prior has arrived by whom I have to acknowledge the receipt of your several letters of the 2d, 3d, 4th, 7th & 20th ult. to which I shall particularly reply.

The accident, which happened to the magazine, by the loss of so much ammunition, was unfortunate indeed; I have directed Captain Ferguson to send you on a proportionable quantity of it, & flints, with other articles in the ordnance department. You will receive them agreeably to the enclosed invoice.

If you should be of opinion that Mr. Melcher's conduct was reprehensible, when fired upon, in ascending the Wabash,[1] you must order him in arrest.

The information you give me, that a plan was certainly on foot to assemble a number of nations at the Miami Village (as soon as the corn will be ripe) in order to pay me a visit, I am obliged to you for—perhaps we may be beforehand with them.

I have been in daily expectation of receiving orders from the War Office to have the sentence of the Court-Martial carried into execution, respecting Graff the murderer & Corporal Gore;[2] but you inform me they have made their escape from the guard house. I expect that you have called the officer of the guard, whoever he was, to a strict account, for this unpardonable neglect of duty. It is more than probable that the guard connived at their escape. It is not too late yet to make the officer answer for his conduct.[3]

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[1] See above, July 28, and Hamtramck to Harmar, August 2.

[2] See Hamtramck to Harmar, August 2, 1790, above.

[3] See below, p. 263.

The muster rolls, monthly returns, inspection returns, and the return of ordnance—all came safely to hand.

We have no brushes & prickers on hand, otherwise I would send them to you.

The men whose times expire shortly can be re-enlisted upon no other terms than what is specified in the Act of Congress of the 30th April last, which I forwarded to you in my letter of the 15th [5th] July last.[4]

I have received the proceedings of the board of officers respecting the deserters from Captain Bradford's company, wherein the board value the clothes, which they robbed Lieut. Schuyler of, at 88 dollars & an half.[5] It is very proper that Mr. Schuyler should be paid for them out of the wages of the deserters in the Captain's hands, and it is very surprizing to me that Capt. Bradford should not have money enough of theirs in his hands for that purpose. I expect that you do examine the officer's books regularly & see that a just & fair statement is made with the men and by all means to prevent any speculation going forward. Lieut. Schuyler can obtain no compensation for the loss of his clothing but by receiving what monies the Captain has belonging to those deserters, which you will order to take place.

If you should be so fortunate to make a successful stroke, either at the Ouiatanon, Vermillion, or L'Anguille, circumstances may render it necessary that you should instantly return to the Post, instead of remaining in the country, which I shall leave to your own judgement; but at all events, endeavor to let me hear from you verbally by a trusty Frenchman or some other person.

You acted very right in dismissing those scoundrels, the Potowatomies & Weas who came in to you with their usual professions of peace without giving them any goods. I suppose they came for nothing but in expectation of receiving some presents.

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[4] See above, p. 236, and note.

[5] See above, August 4, 1790.

The substance of Mr. Tardiveau's letter[6] which you enclosed me, I observe is a request to you to send him a detachment of troops from Post Vincennes for the security of the Illinois Country. This is utterly impracticable at present, and we must have more troops before it can be any way practicable in future.

I hope you have perfectly recovered your health. Major Sargent left me yesterday; he writes to you by this conveyance. It will be proper that you take into the field with you a brass three pounder, and I place the fullest confidence in your abilities, as what we are going to undertake is a serious affair.

I take it for granted that there is not the least relaxation from your former rigid discipline. If any officer should prove refractory, arrest him instantly; you will find that I shall always effectually support you in maintaining the strictest subordination.

I am indeed very sorry to hear of the distressed situation you have been in with respect to provisions, but by this time Mr. Elliott will certainly have forwarded a sufficiency; say two months' provisions, for 500 men.

I have not yet heard from the Pennsylvania militia, nor received any late accounts from Kentucky; but report says they are determined to turn out spiritedly upon the occasion.

When a convenient opportunity offers, return all the boats to headquarters, excepting the one which McCurdy goes in—that, with the perrogues which you can have made at the post, will answer all your purposes.

I am, Dear Major, with great esteem & regard your h'ble serv't,

Jos. Harmar
Lt. Col. Com. 1st U. S. R.

Major J. F. Hamtramck, Com. Officer at Fort Knox
Post Vincennes

P. S. We have heard that you have entered the matrimonial state. Mrs. Harmar & myself wish you every happiness in it.[7] You will please to present our kind compliments to Mrs. Hamtramck and accept them yourself likewise. J. H.

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[6] See above, Tardiveau to Hamtramck, August 1.

[Marginal note:] Favored pr Ensign Prior

Harmar to Capt. James Bradford, September 3, 1790

[Letterbook Copy]

Head Quarters, Fort Washington
September 3d 1790

Sir, It is a long time ago since I received your letter of the 18th March last,[1] and had frequently thoughts of acknowledging it; but as the purport of it was chiefly to obtain my consent to re-engage your men, & to have some alterations made in your clothing, I deferred it until I should see Major Doughty & consult him upon the occasion. The new establishment has now come forward; I wish you may be able to re-enlist your men under it. It will therefore be necessary that you use your utmost endeavors to accomplish this object. I expect to see Major Doughty very shortly; he will give you the necessary directions, whether your companies clothing may be altered agreeably to your wishes, or not. Ensign Prior will deliver you a complete suit for each man.

I think it my duty to inform you that very unfavorable insinuations have gone forward here respecting your conduct towards your men at Post Vincennes—no less than that you speculate in their installments and charge the men extravagant prices for articles furnished them, which were brought on by

[7] Hamtramck had married Marie Josepte Edeline Perrot of Vincennes, widow of Nicholas Perrot. On May 26, 1792, Hamtramck wrote to Winthrop Sargent that they had lost their little daughter, "dead of a remitting fever." Sargent Collection, Massachusetts Historical Society. They had two other daughters, Julienne and Henriette. His wife was drowned on May 21, 1796, while going down the Wabash on her way from Fort Wayne to Vincennes. Hamtramck married Miss Rebecca Mackenzie in 1797. They had two sons, John Francis, Jr., and Alexis H. Bald, "Colonel John Francis Hamtramck," in *Indiana Magazine of History,* XLIV, 344, 351, 352.

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[1] See above.

yourself. Captain McCurdy has spoken loudly about it, and especially against Mr. Vanderburgh.[2] Major Wyllys & Captain Beatty were of opinion that a dishonorable speculation was going on, but that it could not well be traced. There has been no downright assertions, but as I said before, insinuations that it was the case. I sincerely hope for your own credit and reputation that no such traffic has taken place, and the regard which I have for you has determined me to inform you of it.[3] I have written to Major Hamtramck upon the subject. It is more than probable that Major Doughty will write you fully concerning it when he arrives.

I am, Sir, with esteem your h'ble serv't,

Jos. Harmar
Lt. Col. Com. 1st U. S. R.

Captain James Bradford at Fort Knox Post Vincennes
[Marginal note:] favored pr Ensign Prior

Hamtramck to Harmar, September 21, 1790
[ALS]

Fort Knox Sept. 21st 1790

Dear General Prior, McCurdy, and Melker arrived on the 19th all safe. The militia of Kentuck is I suppose at White River by this time. I have not heard of them. The militia of the village are many of them sick. So that I don't expect much from that quarter. I shall take about 50 soldiers the rest being sick. The day that McCurdy arrived their was not one in his company fit for duty. The party will consist of those men that come last. McCurdy is taken sick, Spear is sick. I have been very much so, but I am getting better tho' no so much as I could wish. But I shall certenly go & be persuaded that I will take every possible measure to prevent the Wabash Indians of giving assistance to the Miami. As for drawing the attention of the Miamie this way I believe their is no probability for I am well informed that they know of your comming. I have it from authority. I suppose that the 15 or 16 of Octobre you will be at the Miamie.

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[2] See Harmar to Hamtramck, August 27, above.

[3] On November 2, Bradford replied to Harmar, saying in part: "How far McCurdy may be able to support his illiberal sentiment, will be best for him to determine. However, this much I will assert, that I am ready and willing to submit to a military tribunal the result of which, must either exhonorate me, or criminate the author of such report." Harmar Papers.

I am dear general with every great respect and esteem your most obedient,

J. F. Hamtramck

[Addressed:] The Honorable General Harmar Fort Washington

[Endorsed:] Major John F. Hamtramck from Fort Knox September 21st 1790 Answered Jan'y 15, 1791

Hamtramck to Harmar, November 2, 1790

[ALS]

Fort Knox Vincennes Nov. the 2d 1790

Dear General The militia of Kentucky did not arrive for me to marche by the time appointed in your ordres of the 15th July. They arrived at the village on the 29th of September, and on the 30th I marched for the Vermillion with about three hundred and thirty men, leaving the sick and lame of Kentucke and ours in the garrison which amounted to about ninety men.

The flour I took with me was computed to be sixteen thousan weight, and I had twenty six beaves. I am told that one hundred and fifteen had come to the Ohio for the expedition.[1] On the 10th I arrived at the Vermillion where I found nothing but empty houses, the Indians having left their village for some days before.

As I suspected a great wast in the flour, I appointed a board of officers to enquire and examine in to the state of the provision, and they made me a report that there was only remaining on hand forteen days' flour, and ten days' beef.

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[1] See below, p. 274n.

With so little provision I could not proceed on full allowance to the Weeya where I had an anxious desire to go, and which could not be done in less than nine days (without any interruption) to return to the Vermillion, for I had to cross the Wabash altho' it is represented on Hutchings' map to be on the north side of the river. There is the Keekapoos Village on the north side, but it would have taken me one day more to go to it, owing to the length and badnes of the road, which was the reason why I prefered to go the Weeya.

I had in a moment a number of very chagrining reflections to surmount—the first to have gone so far without seeing an enimy, the small state of my supplys, so small a body of troops and in whom (from a number of information) I had so little confidence of their keeping with me, the regulars exepted. A number of militia had deserted on our march, and the moment I got to the Vermillion when it was talked of in camp among the soldiers that I would go to the Weeya, eleven of them deserted.

Thus, sir, I was situated, and at last concluded to go to the Weeya if possible, and thought that it could not be done with such men as I had without using in the first place mild measures. In consequence of which I issued an ordre recommending to the officers commanding the militia to make use of all their influance to have their men to go on half allowance as the state of the provision could not admit of a full one. My tryal was in vain, but few of them had a dispotition to go. The next day I sent for Major Withly[2] who commanded the Kentuck militia, and in the presence of Major Vanderburgh who commanded the Post militia, Captains McCurdey and Bradford, addressed my self to him in the following terms:

"Sir, the object I had in view on this expedition was to divert the Indians from assembling themselves in one body to oppose General Harmar who is gone to the Miamie. I know not that I have accomplished my object. Wee have come so far without seeing an enimy, and I feel myself very much mortified, not only for my reputation, but that of the whole detachment to return without it. Our supplys are so small that it is impossible to go to the Weeya and return to the post on full allowance, which was the cause of my requesting in the orders of yesterday for the militia officers to use their influence with their men to accept of half allowance. My reason for requesting and not peremptory ordering the militia to accept it, was owing to a suspition I had founded on very good information (which yourself will be the best judge knowing the dispo[si]tion of your men), that they would not go farther. Had I to deal only with regular troops I should order them to live on the barks of the trees if I though[t] it necessary, but with your men unused to military disipline I thought it necessary to take the steps I did yesterday, for I was apprehensive if they were forced on half allowance that they would desert me; ho[w]ever as I wish still to go farther, I now propose to you for me to give a possitive ordres to your men to accept of half allowance and in case of refusal to make use of such force as I have to compel them."

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[2] Maj. William Whitley.

To which the major gived me for answer that it was unnecessary to try, for he know'd they would not go. Which induced me not to make the tryal, for it must have come to some extremity and beside I must confess that I did not promis my self any great success by going to the Weeya, as I promised myself but two things, the first that I might go and burn their twon provoided they had not assembled to give me battle, and on the other hand if they had, I calculated very much to receive a severe drubbing, for my force was at that time very small having many sick with the feaver and measles. I believe no less than 30 men were sick. The Indians if they had collected must have been about six hundred men.

Now, sir, it may be necessary to make some observations respecting Major Whitly, for perhaps it might be supposed that the reason why he give me the answer he did was that he did not want to go himself. No. On the countrary, no man on the expedition was more willing than he was, had we been obliged to live on four ounces of bread a day, I must do him the justice to say that he would have gone with cheerfulness, and as a proof of it the day before when the ordres were given respecting the half allowance, he had his men paraded, made use of all he could, and when he found that they were determined not to go farther, he abused them and called them a set of cowards. So much can I say for Major Whitly that at all times he shew'd me every dispotition to go as far as I pleased to go.

As for the post militia, perhaps they could have been made to go had the Kentuck gone, altho' the French wanted to return to the village for they had left their corn at the mercie of providence who I must say has not taken a very good care of it. A very great part has been destroy'd by the cattle. A number of families who have lost their corn are now making rady to go and pass the winter into the woods, and their is not one family but has suffer'd more or less.

The above, sir, are the occurances of the expedition and altho' I have not had the fortune of seeing an enimy, I hope that I have diverted the Indians of the Wabash from giving assistance to the Indians of the Miamie and hope also that my conduct in my difficulties may be to your satisfaction for two considerations, the first, from a desire I had to discharge my duty towards the public, and the secound that I sincerely wish to merit your approbation.[3]

The couriers you requested me to sent you went from the Vermillion but were chased by the Indians in such maner that they were obliged to return. They were fired upon at the very place I suspected the Indians would have made a stand, the very place where they had assembled to meet General Clark in 1786.[4]

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[3] Secretary of War Knox wrote to the President on December 14, that Lieut. Ebenezer Denny, emissary from Fort Washington, had reported "that, after he left fort Washington he saw, in Kentucky, several men of the militia district, who had been out with Major Whitly, under Major Hamtramck, of the federal troops, who commanded a separate expedition. The said militiamen informed Lieutenant Denny, that Major Hamtramck had destroyed several of the hostile Indian towns, on the Wabash, and had returned to his garrison, at Post Vincennes, without having met opposition." *American State Papers. Indian Affairs,* I, 104.

A large number of horses have been stold by the Indians. Others have given out on the march. The only way that the commissary can account for the difficiency of the flour was occasioned by the bags being rotten.

I can not find what the British are doing at Detroit.

The ordres of the 2d August will be paid attention to.[5]

The officer who commanded the guard when Corporal Coar and Graff made their escape was confind as also the sentinel. The court acquited the officer and punished the centry with 100 lashes.

In my next I shall give you all the information I can of the speculation of the garrison. I inclose Mr. Schyler deffence on his being suspected as a speculator.[6] I inclose the choice of the officer for a paymaster,[7] as also the returns of the inspection of November the 1st, the muster rolls and the monthly returns of the troop and Q master. We have not a pound of musket powdre in the magazine and not above 300 or four hundred flints.

The officers have made application to me that one button more on the leg of the overalls [is] much wanted. As I had no authority to make any addition in the uniform I could not permit it. Beg you will be pleased to let me know.

The garrison is without flower or beef. The contractor has very little credit in the village. I have my self being obliged a number of times to be his security to obtain provision.

The public business now being over I must beg to say something for myself. Major Sergent who is my friend informs me that it is talk of at head quarters that I have been indirectly conserned in speculation. I hope that you will do me the justice to inform me who has supported such an opinion at the expence of my military reputation. Whatever the rights of men may be no one has a wright to support an opinion at the prejudice of an other. My saying that I believe Major Wyllys to be a rascal, Major Doughty to be a thief are not only unwarranted but are in themselfs criminels for which I ought to be prosecuted, who ever has sayd that I was conserned in speculations has injured me because it is unbecoming the officer, and must beg permition to have him arrested if it is an officer unless he should make me satisfactory acknowledgment. If it is a private gent. I shall take some other measures with him.

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[4] At Pine Creek, which enters the Wabash in present Warren County northeast of Williamsport. Dillon, *History of Indiana,* p. 185.

[5] Respecting the effects of deceased soldiers, etc. See Harmar to Hamtramck, above, August 27.

[6] See below.

[7] See below.

I see no great prospects of inlisting men on the new establishment.

Two Indians of the Cro[o]ked Leg Band came last night in twon with a request from the old man to come this winter with his tribe near the village. As he had been before under the protection of the United States I have permited him. I am very much at lost how to acte respecting the Indians. I know that many of them will come in the village this winter to trade. Many of them will be hunting about the post. For me to request the French and the Americans to kill them when ever they see them would be the means of geting the inhabitans serve[d] the same way, for they are out every day and are not in a state of deffence against the Indians. I beg you will inform me how I am to govern myself.

These Indians says that non of the Wabash Indians had gone to the Miamie, as they suspected that an expedition was coming against them and that the Weeya was the place of rendezvous.

I would have sent Lt. Spear before but could not for the want of provision. I am dear general with every sentiment of respect and esteem your most obedient &c, &c,

J. F. Hamtramck

[Endorsed:] Major John F. Hamtramck from Fort Knox, Vincennes November 2nd 1790. Answered January 15th 1791.

[Enclosure 1-D]

Mr. Charles Forgett says that he was at Fort Knox sometime in May 1790 that he heard John McRowden of Capt. McCurdey's company tell Mr. Smith (a store keeper) that he had applyed to Lt. Schuyler (the then command'y officer of the company) for an order on Smith's store for such necessaries as he wanted; but Lt. Schuyler refused, & would not give orders on any person but Mr. Vanderburgh (a store keeper) that said Vanderburgh had nothing to sell but whiskey for which he charged four shillings & six pence Virginia cur'y per quart, & that Mr. Smith had several articles suiting to the soldiers' demand such as bacon butter hogs fat, tobacco dry goods & whiskey, the latter he sold at three shillings pr quart.

[On reverse:] Personally appeared before me Paul Gamelin Esqr one of the magistrates for the county of Knox, John McRowdon soldier in Capt. McCurdy's company and made oath that every thing contained on the other side of this paper which is said to have been related by Mr. Forgett is faulse.

Post Vincennes 26th Oct're '90

[Endorsed:] Charles Forgett's relation respecting Lt. Schuyler & Mr. Vanderburgh

[Enclosure 2-DS]

Fort Knox Oct. 26th 1790

We the officers of the regiment of infantry commanded by Brigadier General Harmar having been called on by Major Hamtramck to nominate a subaltern officer to be the paymaster of the said regiment have subscribed our names for the person who we shuse to have appointed.

J. F. Hamtramck Major	for	Mr. Britt
Will. McCurdy Capt.	Do	Do
Jacob Melcher Ens'n	ditto	ditto
A. Prior Ensign	ditto	ditto
John Elliot Surg's Mate		ditto[8]

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[8] See above, p. 253.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, November 28, 1790
[LS]

FORT KNOX (VINCENNES) Nov'r 28th 1790

DEAR GENERAL The dissagreeable intelligence I have received this day by two Frenchmen who came from the Weeya makes me dispatch this letter to ascertain the facts. They tell me that the Indians of the Miamie burnt their village and had retired on Elk River, where they had lodged their women and children, that a party of six hundred men of your army had been detached from the Miamies to attack them, that our people were defeated and at that time the Indians were from 3 to 400 strong, that the next day a large number of Otawas and of the Five Nations arrived to their assistance, and attacked you on your return and totally defeated you. Those people also informs me that at a river called la Rejouisance, a few miles above the Vermillion, the Wabash Indians to the amount of six hundred men had made a stand to receive me, besides the Kickapoos, from the prairies who were on their march to the place of randezvous, they assure me for certain that none of the Wabash Indians were at the Miamie.

I hope, my dear sir, that if this unfortunate event has happened that you may not be one of the unfortunate. I hope you will be pleased to give me the account of your expedition as soon as possible which will I hope releave not only myself from very great unessiness but every officer of the garrison.

I have not had the honor to hear from you since your letter by Ensign Prior. The garrison is in a very dissagreeable situation. We have been ever since the expedition without meat or flour. I have advanced all the cash I had to the commissary to procure provisions but my purse is exausted. The commissary has no credit himself, and at present we live on corn and whatever we can get from a hunter that he has on White River. The want of provisions has been the cause of a number of cattle of the village being killed by the soldiers to the great injury of the citizens and to my great mortification. I hope that Mr. Spear has arrived safe at head quarters. He [w]ould have gone before but the want of provision [prevente]d it.

*I am, dear general, with very great respect and esteem your most obedient and very humble servent

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

BRIGADIER GENERAL HARMAR

P. S. Since I have wrote the above I am informed that Baptiste Constant is appointed (by Capt. McKee) the great chief of the Weeya[1] and also that one Nicolas Laselle is appointed the interpreter of the Wabash Indians with 20/ pr day New York Cur[rency]. Baptiste Constant is a Frenchman who came with the Weeya Indians when you was at Post Vincennes.

I am told that the reason why the Indians did not attacked me on my return was that they suspected the French I had with me had been forced to march, and that they would not kill them. If so, I am very glad of it, for I had not the greatest opinion of their fighting.

J. F. H.

December 2d 1790.

The express who went to the Falls with this letter having meet a party who was coming with 29 cattle returned. Capt. Asheton has informed me of the terrible catostrophe. I very much lament the lost of so many men but particularly that of my excellent friend Wyllys.[2]

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brig'd General Harmar Fort Washington

[Endorsed:] Hamtramck, Nov. 28, 1790.

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* From this point on the letter is in Hamtramck's hand.

[1] The defection of this Indian to the British was a great loss to the Americans. See mention of him above, pp. 52, 108.

[2] For Harmar's "defeat," see Harmar to Hamtramck immediately below and note.

HARMAR TO HAMTRAMCK, November 29, 1790

[Letterbook Copy]

HEAD QUARTERS, FORT WASHINGTON
November 29th 1790

DEAR MAJOR,

It is a matter of great surprize to me that I have not had a single line from you since my return from the expedition, of course I am a perfect stranger to the operations made in your quarter. The army under my command returned to the post on the 3d inst. having completely burned and destroyed the Miami Village and all the Omee towns with about 20,000 bushels of corn & a vast abundance of vegetables & slain upwards of 100 of their prime warriors, but not without very considerable slaughter upon our side. The loss of Major Wyllys & Lieut. Frothingham[1] is greatly to be regretted. Our total loss was 180—73 of whom were federal troops. The savages fought desperately.[2] Let me have a particular detail of your

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[1] Lieut. Ebenezer Frothingham.

[2] Harmar sent an account of his expedition to Secretary Knox on November 6: "I have the honor to inform you, that, on the 20th September, I marched with 320 federal troops, and 1,133 militia, total, 1,453. After encountering a few difficulties, we gained the Miami village. It was abandoned before we entered it, which I was very sorry for. The villanous traders would have been a principal object of attention. . . . The substance of the work is this, our loss was heavy, but the head quarters of iniquity were broken up. At a moderate computation, not less than 100 or 120 warriors were slain, and 300 log-houses and wigwams burned. Our loss about 180. The remainder of the Indians will be ill off for sustenance; 20,000 bushels of corn, in the ears, were consumed, burned, and destroyed, by the army, with vegetables in abundance. The loss of Major Wyllys and Lieutenant Frothingham, of the Federal troops, and a number of valuable militia officers, I sincerely lament." *American State Papers. Indian Affairs*, I, 104. The heaviest losses were sustained by detachments which were ordered by Harmar against the encampments of the Indians who had fled from their villages. Harmar expressed great dissatisfaction with the militia under fire, and his criticism seemed justified in light of the proportionally heavier losses among the regulars. See account of expedition in Dillon, *History of Indiana*, pp. 245-54.

In September, 1791, a court of inquiry was held "to inquire into the personal conduct of Brigadier General Harmar, commanding officer of the operations, and always send duplicates of your letters. Lieut. Ernest is at Fort Pitt with 2 months' pay for us. I am hourly expecting his arrival here with it, and the new clothing. Do use your utmost endeavors to recruit the men upon the new establishment. I have had fine success here. Captain Strong has nearly completed his company already from the old soldiers.

I am, Dear Major, with great esteem your very h'ble serv't,

Jos. Harmar
Lt. Col. Com. 1st U. S. Reg't.
&
Brig'r Gen'l by Brevet

Major John F. Hamtramck, Commanding Officer at Fort Knox Post Vincennes

[Marginal note:] Pr Cadet Armstrong to the Rapids of the Ohio, to be forwarded from thence pr contractor's boat.

Harmar to Hamtramck, January 15, 1791

[Letterbook Copy]

Head Quarters, Fort Washington
January 15th 1791

Dear Major, I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your two letters, the one dated the 21st September and the other the 2d November, the latter was handed to me by Lieut. Spear.

I observe the great difficulties you had to encounter in commanding the militia upon the late expedition, which will ever be the case as they are totally unaccustomed to discipline, but nevertheless I am certain you did the best in your power to prevent a junction of the Wabash Indians with those of the

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late expedition against the Miami Indians." His personal conduct was pronounced irreproachable by the court and no fault was found with his conduct of the army. *American State Papers. Military Affairs* (7 volumes. Washington, 1832-61), I, 20-30. Harmar resigned from the army, January 1, 1792. On March 4, 1791, Governor St. Clair had become commander-in-chief of the army with the rank of major general.

Miami, and can assure you that your conduct during your tour has met my approbation.[1]

The decision of the President of the United States respecting Core & Graff has at length arrived.[2] He approves of the sentence of the former, and orders that Core shall be executed at such time and place as I shall direct. The sentence of Graff was disapproved of, and he was ordered to be released from confinement. I am sorry they have both made their escape from the guard. If you should ever apprehend Core, order him to be hanged immediately.

Lieut. Schuyler's defence with respect to the relation of Charles Forgett has been received, as also the choice of the officer for pay master.[3] I am hourly expecting the arrival of Lt. Ernest with two months' pay &c, & the clothing, when Ensign Britt who has already entered upon the duties of his office will receive it from him & pay out the cash. I have also received the returns of inspection, the muster rolls dated November 1st, & the monthly returns of the troops.

You inform me that you have not a pound of musquet powder in the magazine, and not above 3 or 400 flints, which is very surprizing as I directed Capt. Ferguson to send on by Ensign Pryor a proportionable quantity of ammunition &c for Post Vincennes, and it was done accordingly. What has become of it?[4] I shall send you some more powder & flints by the first conveyance—ball you have plenty of.

The one button more on the leg of the overalls which the officers have applied for, is unnecessary.

[1] On December 4, 1790, Harmar wrote Secretary of War Knox: "I have at length heard from Major Hamtramck; you will observe by the enclosed extract from his dispatch that his endeavors have not been crowned with much apparent efficiency. The main object of his command however was to divert the savages of the Wabash from forming a junction with their Omee [Miami] friends, and perhaps this has in some measure at least been effected." Harmar Papers.

[2] See above, August 25, 1790.

[3] See p. 265, above, for these two items.

[4] See Hamtramck's reply, February 18, below.

In November last a boat load of provisions on account of the new contractor (Mr. Duer)[5] was forwarded to Post Vincennes which will afford you some relief, but I am rather apprehensive you must be suffering by this time, and there are not very bright prospects of future supplies.

With respect to the speculation said to be going on at Post Vincennes, I must beg leave to refer you to a paragraph of my letter of the 27th August, which I shall now repeat. "I am very sorry to inform you that insinuations have been thrown out here, not only by Captain McCurdy (but Major Wyllys & Captain Beatty also are in the sentiment) that this dishonorable traffic is going on at Post Vincennes, altho' it cannot be perfectly traced. Bradford is by all accounts deep in the business, and that Mr. Vanderburgh is the grand operator."[6]

Such were the insinuations thrown out and principally by Captain McCurdy, who furnished me with Charles Forgett's relation (in Captain Ferguson's handwriting) concerning Lieut. Schuyler. He talked loudly before the officers at head quarters of the speculation at the post, and greatly to the prejudice of Capt. Bradford. It is scarcely possible that he can have the effrontery to deny it.

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[5] William Duer. He resigned as assistant secretary of the treasury in 1790 to become contractor for the army. Jacobs, in his *The Beginning of the U. S. Army*, pp. 119-20, discusses his service. He says that Duer was both dishonest and mercenary. During his contract the army bordered on starvation and St. Clair's defeat in 1791 may be partially attributed to him.

Governor St. Clair was cynical in regard to the new contract, writing to Knox, November 20, 1790, "You have now a new set of contractors. It is to be hoped—no, it is to be wished— that they may do better, but it is scarcely possible. The contract was at a price before at which the supplies could not be furnished without loss. It is now at a loss, and the poor soldiers will be the sacrifice. The small articles which form a material part of their small ration will never be furnished at all, as they have heretofore been but very seldom furnished, and the money that should be paid for them will sink in their own hands for some trifling article sold them at an extortionate rate; for the soldier will take any thing in exchange for a piece of paper, which he has no other way of taking care of than in his knapsack." Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers*, II, 196.

[6] For Hamtramck's observation on Bradford see his letter to Harmar, January 25, below.

You wish to know how to act with regard to the Crooked Leg Band of Indians & others who intend coming settling near the village. My opinion is that you ought to have no intercourse with them, as they are all treacherous in the greatest degree; however, if you are fully convinced that any tribe is seriously inclined to take the protection of the United States, in that case I leave it to your own discretion how to act.

On the 10th instant a body of savages to the amount of near 200 besieged a small station called Coleraine[7] about 17 miles from hence, situate on the Great Miami. Lt. Kingsbury whom I had ordered there for the protection of the settlement, with 12 Federal troops & about 22 of the inhabitants gave them such a warm reception that they retired with the loss of 15 or 20 killed & wounded, after having been 25 hours before the place. They summoned it to surrender, & endeavored to set it on fire with flaming arrows. Only one of the Federal troops was slightly wounded upon the occasion. They took off with them almost all the cattle & corn belonging to the poor inhabitants, which distresses them very much.[8]

This garrison is exceedingly weak at present, owing to my having discharged upwards of 100 men who would not reenlist upon the new establishment. A considerable number have re-enlisted, but it would not do for soldiers in the same service to receive some 4 dollars & others only 2 dollars pr month which was the reason of my giving them their discharges, but those orders are not to extend to your Post, as I have no men to send you; therefore your command are to serve out their three years on the old establishment, if they will not engage upon the new.

The Kentuckyans talk of carrying on an expedition early

[7] Also called Dunlap's Station.

[8] The Indians were led by Simon Girty, a British agent of long experience with the red men. Bond, *The Foundations of Ohio,* p. 300. There is a lengthier account of this affair in Harmar's letter to Knox, January 25, 1791, in the Harmar Papers.

in the Spring against the Wabash Indians.[9] It is therefore necessary to apprize you of it, as their proposals have met with my concurrence, and I have already furnished them with powder & lead for the purpose.

I am, Dear Major, with great esteem your h'ble serv't,

Jos. HARMAR
Brig'r Gen'l

MAJOR HAMTRAMCK Comm'g Officer at Fort Knox Post Vincennes.

P. S. Is it not possible for you to build half a dozen perrogues? They will cost the public but little. J. H.

[Marginal note:] Forwarded from hence pr Mr. Mitchell, to the care of Capt. Asheton.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, January 25, 1791

[ACS]

(Duplicate)

FORT KNOX Jan'y 25th, 1791

DEAR GENERAL, I have to acknowledge your letter of the 29th of November in which you informed me of your expedition. I sincerely lament the fate of Major Wyllys. He is certainly a very great loss to your regiment, and I can assure you that Mr. Frothingham and him are very much regreted by all the officers of this garrison. Capt. McCurdy expresses a desire to go on furlough. He is going as far as head quarters with my permission where he will receive your directions. I had no objections to his going as I concluded that he might kill two birds with one stone, that is, that he might be gratified in his request and recruit his company on the new establishment.

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[9] In late May and early June Brigadier-General Charles Scott, on orders from Secretary of War Knox, led a force of eight hundred mounted and armed men to the Wea villages. The villages were burned and many Indians killed or taken prisoner. Dillon, *History of Indiana*, pp. 262-65; *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, I, 129-35. A second expedition, led by Brig-Gen. James Wilkinson, was made later in the summer against the Miami town on Eel River, Ke-na-pa-com-aqua. Dillon, *op. cit.*, pp. 267-71; Wilkinson to St. Clair, August 24, 1791, in Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers*, II, 233-39.

In the course of this winter the French people have found in the woods between the post and White River eleven or twelve horses who have been lost by the militia of the expedition. As I had no means to support them, I have permited those people to keap them until spring, or untill your pleasure was known.[1] I inclose the list of the men who have inlisted in the new establishment and to whom I was obliged to give half gallon whisky pr man as a bounty; this although an expence I conceived was more benefitial to the interest of the United States than new recruits from the Atlantic: they have been transfered to their new companies. Also is enclosed the last muster rolls, inspection returns, monthly returns, &c of the garrison, and the muster rolls of the militia of Post Vincennes on the expedition, the acct. current of the soldiers who have died and deserted.

I had two guides with me who are not included in the muster rolls and to whom I promised the same pay that yours might have.

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[1] Governor St. Clair wrote Knox in May: ". . . you have yet not received the vouchers for those [militia] employed on the Wabash under Major Hamtramck, and if the circumstances I have been informed of are true, they ought not to be paid. They are these—that upon the expedition, from the time of the troops leaving Fort Knox until they returned, ten horses only were lost; that the remainder, amounting to upward of two hundred, were delivered over to a Major Whitley, the commanding officer of the militia, to take back to Kentucky; that many of them are yet about Vincennes, in possession of the inhabitants, and that out of ninety-six oxen which Major Whitley set out with from the Falls, he took but twenty to Fort Knox, which was the cause of Major Hamtramck returning so soon, and attempting so little against the Indians. I have written to Major Hamtramck this day to have what horses are about St. Vincennes collected and sold to the best advantage, and to state circumstances respecting those that have been lost, and have them authenticated, as also respecting the cattle, that the United States may be exonerated, if it should appear proper." Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 214-15.

I am informed that the Miamie Indians have gone to Detroit. I will be very much obliged to you if you will be so good as to send me the ranks of the officers. In one of your letters you informed me that the officers of this garrison were very much suspected to be concerned in speculation with the soldiers and you request of me to put a stop to it. In answer to which I must beg of you to be fully persuaded that if I had had sufficient proof of any thing of that case having taken place that the officers so offending would have been arrested for it. Major Wyllys must have communicated you my sentiments respecting officers geting the pay of their men into their hands and of supplying their men with effects. I had mentioned my objections to Wyllys with an intention that he shoul[d] represent it to you but *in a private maner.*[2] I told him I was an enemy of the present mode of payment to come in the officers hands and they at the same time supplying their men with goods that it was opening a door for speculation, that there was a company in the garrison (Bradford) who were so much in debt to their capt. that the capt. wanted to keep all the cash he had received from Beatty and that in consequance of it I had been obliged to give ordres to the contrary, that the soldiers always in debt to his capt. and not being able to get money when the pay master arrived, was disgusted and probably desert. Wyllys agread with me and promised to speak to you about it so that if you was of the same opinion, to have it for the future prohibited.[3]

The contractor's boats have been frosen in the Wabash all this winter.

I am, dear general, with very great sentiments of respect and esteem your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

P. S. When Wyllys went from this place to the Falls of Ohio having no public horse on hand at that time to let him have, I lent him mine who has died in his possesion. I had intended to make a bill of it against the United States, but if you will give me permission I will take one of those who have been found and of the same value which is not much but it is better for the public to bear the lost than me.

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[2] See Hamtramck to Harmar, June 24, 1790, above.

[3] See above, pp. 235, 253.

J. F. H.

[Addressed:] The Honorable Briga'r Gener. Harmar Fort Washington

[Endorsed:] Hamtramck Jan. 25, 1791

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, January 28, 1791

[ALS]

FORT KNOX VINCENNES Jan'y the 28th 1791

DEAR GENERAL, The men who are in Capt. McCurdey's boat are all of them (four exepted) men that have not inlisted in the new establishment. The list of them is inclosed with the date of the expiration of their first inlistment: the other four are going to Head Quarters with my permission, where they are to make application for a furlough. Their is a French man who has come from the Vermillion this day and informs me that every preparations are making to go to war this spring, and that this village is one of their objects for having gone on the expedition. This information may be, or not be. I only give you my information as I have received it.

The 20th of December I sent an express to the Falls who has not return'd. The 15 of January I dispatched a n'other to know what had become of the first and has not yet return'd. I again send to be informed what has become of them: I suspect they have been taken prisoner.

The contractor boats have this day arrived from the Grand Rapids where they have been all this winter.

The governor some time ago requested me to give him my opinion respecting the Indian affairs of this country. In obediance of which I have wrote to his excellency the inclosed which is left open for your perusal, and beg you would be so good to seal it and forward it on to Muskingum.[1]

I am dear general with every sentiments of respect and esteem your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

BRIGAD. GENERAL HARMAR

[Addressed:] Honorable Brigad'r General Harmar Fort Washin[g]ton

[Endorsed:] Hamtramck Jan 28, 1791.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, February 18, 1791
[ALS]

FORT KNOX VINCENNES February 18th 1791

DEAR GENERAL, I have to acknowledge your letter of the 29th of November '90, as also one of the 15th January '91, and in which you observe how it happens that we are without musket poudre or flints. We had very little in the magazine before we received that of head quarters which was only 105 lb musket pouder and 375 flints. The militia who went on the expedition received 172 lb of pouder and 965 flints which took all we had on hand.

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[1] This is apparently the letter from Hamtramck to St. Clair which is printed under date of December 2, 1790, in Smith (ed.), *St. Clair Papers,* II, 197-98. In it Hamtramck states as his opinion "that nothing can establish a peace with the Indians as long as the British keep possession of the upper forts; for they certainly are daily sowing the seed of discord betwixt the measures of our Government and the Indians." He added that the Indians would not be subdued by merely burning their villages and destroying their crops for they can live off game and their houses can be rebuilt, "as a bird does his nest." Also they would never face an enemy unless they had decided advantage. The Indians would have to be surprised in their own town or camp. Hamtramck did not believe a treaty of peace could accomplish much because the Kentuckians would be the first to break it. He concluded that "until we are securely intrenched in the Indian country, we never can be sure that peace is fully established, for as the thirst of war is the dearest inheritance an Indian receives from his parents, and vengeance that of the Kentuckians, hostility must then be the result on both sides."

I have also observed the paragraph of your letter respecting the speculation; the reason why I did not aprehend that it was McCurdy who should have insinuated that I was conserned, was from his repeated protestation to me that he never had heard any thing of it at head quarters which induced me to believe that it was some other person who had made the report. McCurdy did not deny of accusing Bradford but said that he never spoke of any body else. I have permited Serjt. Smith of the artillery to go to head quarters on the recruiting service. He has with him a number of men. The expiration of their inlistments is inclosed as also the monthly return of the troops.

The continual drunkeness of Lieut. Schuyler and other base conduct has compelled me to arrest him, the copy of his charge is inclosed.[1]

One Edward Commins, a reinlisted soldier in Capt. Beatty company, is going to head quarters. As he is an excellent man I promised him a furlough to go to Catfish [Pennsylvania] where he inlisted and beg you would give him one.

My state of health has been so much injured since I have been at this place that I must beg of you to permit me to leave the garrison in the next sickly season. If I should find it necessary to take a change of air I know not where I should go; perhaps to the Kaskaskias, the Falls, or head quarters. I was very sick all last summer and I should be extreamly glad to escape it this year.

A number of men who had been sent on command up the river has been reinlisted and detained. I will be very much oblig'd to you if you will be pleased to inform me if the later has been done by your direction. Some of those men I am told are with Smith and Strong. One Maloy of Bradford company has been reinlisted by Capt. Smith. He is a very valuable man as a courier, he is an excellent woods man and has sav'd many dollars to goverment which I would have been obliged to give to the expresses I have been obliged to send to the Falls and Illinois from time to time. I will be much oblig'd to you if you will permit me to keep him and that you would direct his capt. to send him on his cloathing &c.

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[1] This is in the Harmar Papers.

An inhabitant was the other day killed about 4 miles from the garrison and a number of horses stolen.

It is no exaggeration when I say that two thirds of the time of the last contract the troops were obliged to take corn. Is it possible that we must submit to such usage and they so well paid? I fear that it will be the case again with the present contractors.[2] I believe the troops have had about six months weesky [whiskey] last year and not a drop as yet this year.

I am inform'd from Kentuck that one Doctor James O Fallin is raising 3000 men in Kentucky, Cumberland and Frankland to take and keep possession of a country on the Mississipy known by the name of the Walnut Hills for the South Carolina Yasou Company.[3] I suppose you know all about it.

Since the return of the men reinlisted has been made, three or four have been inlisted by the officers of the garrison.

I must conclude my letter by assuring you with how much respect and esteem I have the honor to be your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. Hamtramck

Brigd. General Harmar

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brigadier General Harmar
Fort Washington

[Endorsed:] Hamtramck Feb. 18, 1791.

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[2] See above, p. 271.

[3] O'Fallin was general agent of the South Carolina Yazoo Company. See above, p. 252n. His grand project was the conquest of Louisiana for the Yazoo Company with the help of the British navy. He was inspired to this scheme at the time of the Nootka Crisis when England and Spain seemed on the verge of war, and he hoped for the aid of British naval power in the Gulf of Mexico. The crisis passed and O'Fallin's scheme fell flat. Walnut Hills or Los Nogales was an American colony on the Mississippi Bluffs at the mouth of the Yazoo River, started by the Yazoo Company. But Spain intervened and built a fortification there to thwart the ambitious schemes of the company, and the colony languished. Whitaker, *The Spanish-American Frontier,* Chapter X and index.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, March 4, 1791

[ALS]

FORT KNOX VINCENNES March 4th 1791

DEAR GENERAL The great success we have had in the recruiting service is much more than I expected. Sixty nine men are now reinlisted, Bradford 36, McC.[1] 20, and Beatty 13. Five were all that was remaining of the old establishment present in the garrison, the rest being in command at head quarters. Such number being so inconsiderable and the impropriety of the difference of pay has induced me to discharge them on the 2d inst. They are now going up the river where with probability they may be inlisted. Their names are George Sears, James McClean, Peter Gilman, Cornelius Murphey and James Fleming.

One Isac Fleming who is the only blacksmith I had has gone to head quarter with Capt. McCurdey. His going was by a mistake. I did not know that the blacksmith name was Fleming when McCurdey asked me for him to go up the river. I beg you would be pleased to send him on as soon as possible, his being a reinlisted soldier and so much wanted, for we must pay very dear for any blacksmith work we want done. Boyer, Starkey, Hepple, Carr, and Fleming who went up with McCurdey are all reinlisted soldiers.

Inclosed is the monthly return of the troops.

I have nothing new since I had the honor of writing you last, the duplicate of w[h]ich is inclosed.

I have the honor to be sir with very great respect your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

BRIGD. GENERAL HARMAR.

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brigadier General Harmar Fort Washington

[Endorsed:] Hamtramck March 4, 1791.

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[1] McCurdy.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, April 14, 1791

[ALS]

FORT KNOX April 14th 1791

DEAR GENERAL

Mr. Britt arrived with Col. Mentges[1] on the 6th inst. The inspection took place on the 12th, the particulars of which will no doubt be communicated by the inspector which I hope, and expect will be favourable.

I have no newse to inform you with for we have no communication with the Indians exept three or four who are on Embares River which is six miles from the garrison.

When Lieut. Spear went up the river last autumn, he had with him a number of men belonging to head quarters and to whom I ordered some cloathing which was taken from Bradford, McCurdey, and Beattey to be given them, to be returned. Lieut. Spear had the list of those men. I will be very much oblige to you if you will be pleased to direct their officers to forward it on by the first opportunity.

I have the honor to inclose the monthly return of the troops, the return of Q. M. stores; the return of military stores is not yet finished, but I can inform you that we have but very few flints.

I have the honor to be sir with every sentiments of respect and esteem your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

BRIGD. GENER. HARMAR

P. S. Mrs. Hamtramck who is very sick begs to have her respects presented to you and Mrs. Harmar. The wallnuts were deliver'd by Mr. Britt.

J. F. H.

N. B. About 260 souls have this spring gone from our village to L'Ance a la Graise on the Spanish side.[2] J. F. H.

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[1] Col. Francis Mentges.

[2] See above, p. 201n.

Hamtramck to Harmar, May 9, 1791

[ALS]

Fort Knox Vincennes May the 9th 1791

Dear General,

Since I had the honor of writing you last which was by Mr. Britt a French man who has come from above informs me that it is certain that the Indians who had laid siege to Colerain were some of those we had treated with.[1] They were the Delawares, Shawnoes, Miamies, Wayendotts, Ottawas, and Chepawas to the amount of 500. He also informs me that the Indians had determined to come in a large body to Post Vincennes some time this summer. If it is so I shall be ready to receive them. I have plenty of provision and consequently out of any danger. Had you more troops at head quarters I would ask for few more for we are weak and sickly. But if none comes we will do as well as we can.

The navigation of the Wabash has meet with no sort of interruption this year, but if we have right to draw any conclusion from circumstances, the Indians remain[in]g so still makes me suppose that they are assembling at some place of randezvous to decide and determine on peace or a war.

Inclosed is the monthly return of the troops for May.

I have the honor to be, sir, with every sentiments of respect and esteem yours &c &c,

J. F. Hamtramck

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brigadier General Harmar Fort Washington, to be left with Capt. Asheton at the Rapids of the Ohio.

[Endorsed:] Hamtramck May 9, 1791.

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[1] See Harmar to Hamtramck, January 15, above.

HAMTRAMCK TO HARMAR, June 15, 1791

[ALS]

FORT KNOX VINCENNES June the 15th 1791

DEAR GEN'L, I had the honour to adress you on the 7th inst. by Mr. Melcher who was the bearer, but unfortunately my letter fell into the hands of the Indians. Mr. Melcher went from here on the 8th with two soldiers and was attacked in his camp on the evening of the same day near White River. The two soldiers were killed and Ens. Melcher had the good fortune of making his escape but lost everything.[1] I now send you a duplicate which I hope will meet with a better fate.

The 4th inst. an Indian chief of the Weeha with twenty men of that nation arrived at Fort Knox. Their business was to beg for a peace with the U. States for their nation only, as they were not authorized by any other. They informed me that they had received an invitation from the English at Detroit to come to them to receive arms and ammunition to defend themselves against the Americans who were to carry on three expeditions this summer. One was to be at the Weeha an other at the Miamis and the other somewhere else,[2] that they refused the invitation that the Weeha nation beged of me to prevent the expedition which was to go against them, and that in the autum they would come down to Post Vincennes where a perfect peace should be established. I made them the following reply—that since I had been at Post Vincennes I had received repeatedly messages from the Indians of the Wabash by whome they protested an unfeigned friendship and attachments for the U. States when at the same time some of their warriors were killing our women and children, that I was tired of such conduct on their parts, that they had acted more like children than men who should have keeped their words sacred and that I was shure the U. States would no more be deceived by such perfidious promisses, that if any expedition was to go against them that they were the only one who they had to blame for it, that nevertheless I would inform my great chiefe of their embassy as I could do nothing myself, and that he would give them an answer. I also observed to them that it appeared difficult to me for a single villiage to be taken under the protection of the U. States, that it ought to be a general affair with all the Wabash Indians, as our traders and our boats would be liable to be insulted by the other Indians who inhabit the river, to which the chiefe made in reply that I was right and that he himself saw the difficulties attending such a partial negotiation, that he would go to all the nations and do every thing he could to bring the Indians into his measure, and in a private conversation he had with me he insinuated that he had but very little doubt of his success.

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[1] Melcher had run into disaster at an earlier date. See above, pp. 238-40.

[2] Perhaps the Indians had heard rumors of the expeditions led by Scott and Wilkinson. See above, p. 273n.

There is a French man here who is from the Miamie who informs me that the Indians of that place had been supplyed with corn and flour from Detroit by the merchants of that place, that the Indians had been informed of an expedition to be against them and had sent to the lakes a number of belts to invite the Indians to their support as they were determined to make a stand.

I have received the other day a letter from Capt. Asheton with a list of the officers appointed. I would be very much oblige to you if you would be so good as to sent me the act of Congress respecting it. In my letter of the 18 of February last I mentioned that my state of healt[h] had been so much injured since I had been at this place that I was in the necessity of requesting the permition to leave the garrison in the next sickly season if I should find it necessary to take a change of air; that I did not know where I should go, perhaps to the Illinois, the Falls or head quarters. I should be glad of your answer respecting it.[3]

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[3] Apparently Hamtramck remained at Fort Knox until late in the summer when he went to Fort Washington to take command of the First Infantry Regiment in St. Clair's expedition against the Indians. He returned to Fort Knox on December 21. While he was gone Lieut. Abner Prior com-

Inclosed is the duplicate of the monthly return of June the 1st 1791.

If I have not sent you duplicates of the letters I have wrote you before, it was in consequance of my being informed that the persons who carried them had arrived save at head quarters and not from a neglect on my part.

I have been informed that the governor was in Kentuck and have wrote to him the affair of the Indians.

I am, dear general, with every sentiments of respect and esteem your most obedient and very humble servent,

J. F. HAMTRAMCK

BRIGD. GENERAL HARMAR

P. S. I know nothing of the contract price for the ration at this place. J. F. H.

[Addressed:] The Honorable Brigadier General Harmar Fort Washington

[Endorsed:] Hamtramck June 15, 1791

manded the garrison. Hamtramck to Winthrop Sargent, February 4 and August 9, 1792. Sargent Collection, Massachusetts Historical Society.

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